

Saddam is seen emerging winner from confrontation

BAGHDAD (AFP) — President Saddam Hussein has emerged a winner from his latest confrontation with Washington, holding on to gains in Iraqi Kurdistan and widening a rift between the Gulf war allies, diplomats here say.

The U.S. cruise missile attacks and Washington's decision to suspend the U.N. oil-for-food deal served internally to bolster his warnings that the United States was out to destroy the whole Iraqi nation, they said.

"The Iraqi government now has a foothold in the north," said an East European diplomat, even if its troops do retreat from the Kurdish "safe haven" patrolled by the 1991 Gulf war allies who evicted Iraq from Kuwait.

Iraqi troops seized the main Kurdish city of Erbil Saturday, handing it over to allies of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP).

The operation sparked the U.S. attacks Tuesday and Wednesday in which Baghdad said six people died.

"So long as the alliance lasts between Baghdad and Masoud Barzani, Baghdad will have a say" in north Iraq, the diplomat said, referring to the KDP chief locked in battle with Jalal Talabani of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan.

Another diplomat, who likewise declined to be named, said the U.S. attacks only won the support of Britain among the key allies.

France kept a wide berth and Russia condemned operation "Desert Strike."

"The fact that the unanimity between these countries was

clearly broken is an achievement for Iraq. It will now be more difficult for the United States to have its decisions passed in the U.N. Security Council," he said.

U.S. President Bill Clinton's move to suspend implementation of the oil-for-food deal, due to start this month, was a signal of Washington's failure to clinch an international consensus, the diplomat said.

Under the deal signed in May, Baghdad is to resume limited oil exports to finance food and medicine imports, for the first time since the United Nations slapped a crippling embargo after Iraq's August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

"The U.S. decision affects all 20 million Iraqis without distinction. How can you convince them that only the regime is being targeted?" asked one diplomat, airing a view shared by several of his colleagues posted in Baghdad.

Many Iraqis also saw the U.S. strikes as an election ploy by Mr. Clinton ahead of presidential polls on Nov. 5. Mr. Clinton himself on Wednesday hailed the U.S. military offensive against Iraq as a success and said it had accomplished its mission of curbing Iraq's military might.

His assessment came on the heels of wide public approval at a critical time.

One poll showed 80 per cent of U.S. nationals supported Desert Strike and another found that 56 per cent would prefer to have Mr. Clinton in charge of the operation against 33 per cent for presidential challenger Bob Dole.

Israeli police brutality against Palestinians is rising — group

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Israeli police brutality is increasing against Palestinians found within Israel's borders illegally, a human rights organization said Thursday.

"The suspicion arises that an unwritten policy exists under which beatings, ill-treatment and degradation are used to deter Palestinians from entering Israel without permit," said the B'tselem watchdog group in a statement.

The group said the violence was related to efforts to enforce a closure imposed on the West Bank and Gaza some six months ago after bombings by militants in Israel. The measure keeps tens of thousands of Palestinians from jobs in Israel as is causing an ever-worsening economic crisis.

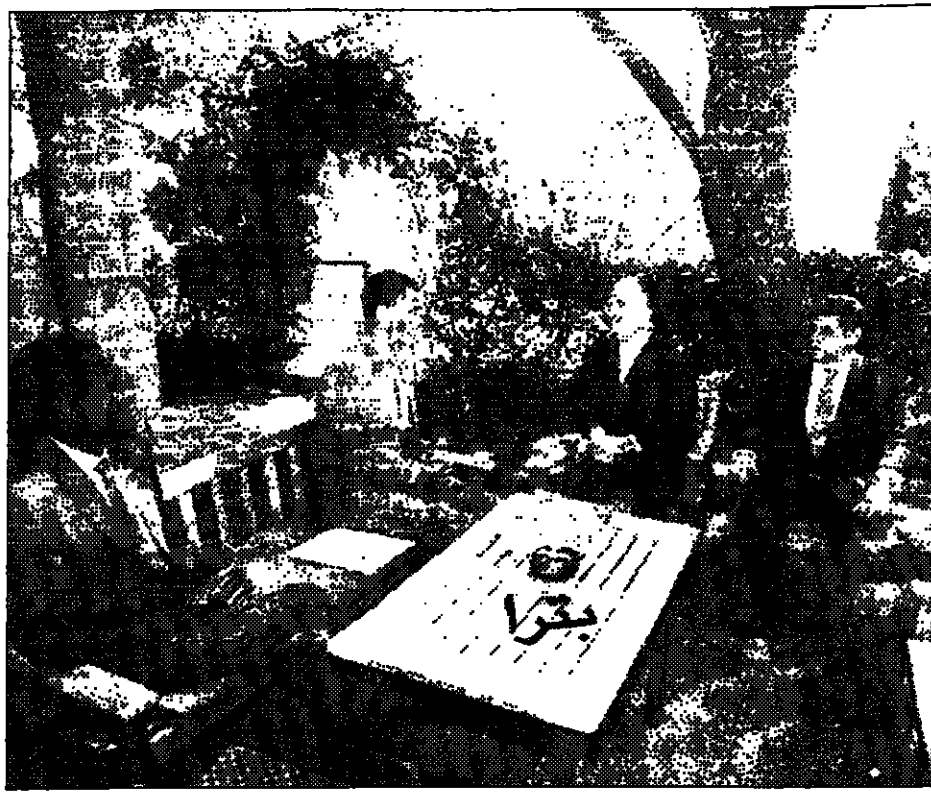
Police spokeswoman Linda Menuhin dismissed the allegations of an unwritten policy to use violence.

"Police actually have been instructed by the minister of public security to lessen violence," Ms. Menuhin said.

A detailed report released Tuesday presents testimony on eleven incidents in June and July in which Palestinians were allegedly abused by Israeli law enforcement officials. In one testimony, labourer Isah Sabha said police broke his leg at a construction site where he had found work illegally.

In another, 17-year-old Ibrahim Salah told B'tselem that he was taken from his father's home in Jerusalem on June 23 by security officers and beaten badly in the face, head and neck. Salah, who said he lost his hearing in one ear, claimed one officer promised to shoot him if he ever returned to Jerusalem.

REGENT MEETS SENE-
GALESE ENVOY: His
Royal Highness Crown
Prince Hassan, the Regent,
on Friday receives Senegalese
President Abdou Diouf's greet-
ings and appreciation for
the Kingdom's leadership
and the keenness of Seneg-
al to bolster bilateral ties
with Jordan. The meeting
centred on issues of con-
cern to the Islamic World
and the role that Jordan
and Senegal could play in
respect to those issues.
Attending the meeting was
Royal Court Chief Awn
Khasawneh and Michael
Hamaneh, director of the
office of the Crown Prince
(Petra photo)



Journalist reportedly wanted for questioning on lese majeste charge

By a Jordan Times
staff reporter

AMMAN — Police are searching for at least one journalist on charges of lese majeste, and three others are in detention on similar or related charges, according to reports in the local press.

Police sources declined direct comment on the report. "We are indeed looking for some people for questioning in connection with violations of the law," that is all a police source would say. The source would not confirm reports that some of the wanted were already arrested and were being questioned.

On Wednesday, Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti told Parliament five people were sought for investigation.

According to a report in the Shihaan weekly tabloid, police are looking for columnist Nihad Hattar, who, along with fellow journalists Abdullah Abu Roumman and Malek Athamneh and administrator Naeem Al Tal, could face lese majeste charges.

Shihaan said in its Tuesday issue that police had searched the offices of a proposed but unlicensed weekly called Al Mithaq and confiscated documents. The documents were believed to have been the foundation for the lese majeste charges.

The report said Mr. Abu Roumman, Mr. Athamneh and Mr. Tal were arrested but Mr. Hattar was still at large.

Writing in Shihaan from his hideout, Mr. Hattar said police had visited his office as well as home searching for him, and had removed papers from his office, including published and unpublished articles.

Mr. Hattar said he was willing to surrender to the authorities but would do so only if he

was given "legal guarantees" that he will not be "beaten" up in custody and that he would be given "a fair trial."

According to Mr. Hattar, he faces lese majeste charges, but there was no independent confirmation of this account.

Reports said Mr. Hattar's lawyers were filing a case against the government for not granting him a licence for Al Mithaq. The ground for the case, said the reports, was that Mr. Hattar and his associates had filed an application for licence on July 11, but were not given any answer in the stipulated 30 days from the receipt of the application.

Mr. Athamneh, a journalist working for Al Bilad weekly, was implicated along with Mr. Hattar, Mr. Abu Roumman and Mr. Tal because he was believed to have been involved in the issuance of facsimile messages related to the unrest in the south.

Mr. Athamneh could also face other charges related to violations of the Press and Publications Law along with three of his colleagues and the publisher of the weekly, Dar Al Bilad for Press and Publications.

The charges stemmed from published Al Bilad reports related to the unrest in the south after the reports were found to have been "misleading and inaccurate" and "instigating sedition."

Mr. Athamneh's colleagues, chief editor Khaled Kasasbeh and reporters Taha Abu Reden and Rakan Saidieh, were arrested last month and released on bail after a few days. A special court dealing with violations of the Press and Publications Law is expected to try the four, along with the publishers of the weekly, Dar Al Bilad for Press and Publication.

Sources confirmed that

another journalist, Muwaffaq Mahaddin of Al Majd weekly, was also being sought, but the nature of charges against him were not immediately known.

Also remained unknown on Friday was whether Al Ahali chief editor Osama Rantisi faced charges.

Al Ahali is the mouthpiece of the Jordan People's Democratic Party (JPDP), which was accused by officials of involvement in the unrest in the south.

Authorities have already made the first step towards prosecuting Hussein, a journalist with the Al Aswaq daily and believed to be an influential figure in the pro-Iraq Jordan Arab Baathist Socialist Party, another group which has been accused by the government of having instigated the riots in the south.

Sources said the prosecution had already forwarded the case against Hussein to the State Security Court, where he is expected to be charged for "instigating sedition" — a charge that carries a sentence of three to 15 years.

One hundred and forty-four people, 38 of them members of political parties or known political activists, are expected to be put on trial in connection with the unrest in the south. Seventeen are still being questioned.

During the riots in the south, protesters attacked government and private property, including the state-run, Civil Consumers Corporation, ministry departments and commercial banks, as well as government and private vehicles.

His Majesty King Hussein has said that only those directly involved in the rampage and destruction and those who incited the riots would be prosecuted.

Taleban claim capture of key town

ISLAMABAD (Agencies)

The Taleban militia claimed Friday to have captured the strategically important eastern Afghan town of Azra after heavy fighting with Kabul government forces.

"Azra is in complete control of Taleban," Taleban spokesman Ahmad Jan was quoted by the Afghan Islamic Press (AIP) agency as saying.

Taleban forces now control all of Azra district including its central town of the same name, AIP quoted Mr. Jan as saying in the northwestern Pakistani town of Peshawar.

There was no independent confirmation of the report.

AIP said the government, in a bid to retake the town, had sent reinforcements, including tanks, to the area on Thursday night and on Friday from Kabul and the eastern town of Sarobi in an apparent move to block the Taleban advance.

A neutral administration in adjoining Nangarhar province also has sent forces to strengthen its positions on the provincial border to check any Taleban encroachment, it said.

An Afghan government spokesman said in Kabul on Thursday that the Taleban had launched a major assault on Azra in an apparent move to reach Sarobi, about 60 kilometres east of Kabul, and control the main eastern highway to Pakistan.

Both sides used artillery and tanks in the battle, AIP said.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Palestinian police officer dies of blast

GAZA CITY (AFP) — A Palestinian police officer died Friday of wounds he suffered at the end of August when a mine near an Israeli listening device exploded here. Palestinian hospital sources said. The body of Tawfik Yakji, 22, was brought Friday from an Israeli hospital to Shifa hospital in Gaza, the sources said. Palestinian President Yasser Arafat said Sunday that the Israeli secret service had connected the listening equipment near the place where an old Israeli mine exploded four days before in the Palestinian security forces' headquarters here. "We found Israeli listening devices near the place where the mine blew up and we are investigating," he said. Palestinian sources said the equipment was connected to the telephone line of a cubicle inside the headquarters. The building used to house Israeli military installations before the beginning of Palestinian autonomy in 1994. Four Palestinian police officers were wounded in the mine explosion, one of them seriously.

Israeli acquitted of 'spying for Iran'

TEL AVIV (AP) — An Israeli man who said he offered his services to Iranian intelligence in hopes of winning the respect of Israeli spy masters was acquitted of espionage Thursday. "The actions of the defendant were the result of a combination of stupidity and childish imagination together with a desire to make money," Israeli Radio quoted from the ruling by the court. "There is no justification for prosecuting him for such grave crimes as espionage and aiding a hostile country," the court said. Instead, the judges convicted Herzl Rad, 32, of contacting a foreign agent and sentenced him to three years in prison. Rad told the court he desperately wanted to be hired by Israel's intelligence service and hoped to prove his worthiness by establishing contact with Iranian intelligence, the radio said. Rad had been accused of approaching Iranian agents in Istanbul, Turkey, in March and going with them to Iran for training. Prosecutors said the Iranians asked Rad to carry out assignments in the United States and Israel in exchange for \$10,000. Rad was arrested in May and his closed-door trial began last August. Rad has protested his innocence to reporters and his attorney claimed Rad was kidnapped by the Iranians in Turkey.

Suspected militants kill lawyer in Egypt

CAIRO (R) — Suspected militants in southern Egypt on Thursday shot dead a lawyer they thought was a police informer, security sources said on Friday. The gunman, believed to be members of the Gamaa Al Islamiyah, shot Asham Nabih Tawfik, director of legal affairs in the town council, out off his head and hid it, the sources said. The gunman escaped into the fields around Om Alqur village, near the southern town of Mallawi, which has been a hotbed of militant violence. Gamaa members, seeking to overthrow the government and replace it by a strict Islamist state, have targeted security personnel, their civilian allies, tourists, Christians and informers in their four-year-old armed struggle.

MEA stewards to strike on Sunday over pay demands

BEIRUT (R) — Middle East Airlines (MEA) stewards will stage a seven-hour strike on Sunday over pay demands, MEA stewards' union said in a statement published on Friday. The statement said the union voted on the strike after "the MEA management failed to keep its promises to meet salary demands by the company employees. The Sunday strike will be confined to Beirut airport only as a first step," the statement published in Beirut newspapers said. The strike, to be carried out between 7:00 a.m. (0400 GMT) and 2:00 p.m. (1100 GMT), will delay nine MEA scheduled flights out of Beirut including flights to London, Rome, Frankfurt and Paris. The union's demands include the adoption of a new pay scale for the company's 330 stewards.

Cyprus police at a loss in AIDS case

NICOSIA (AFP) — Cypriot police have so far been powerless to act against a fisherman who is accused of knowingly infecting a British tourist with the AIDS virus, official sources said Friday. They said the man was still believed to be "very sexually active, and other women may also have been infected" with the killer disease. "But we can't proceed against him without any statements by doctors to confirm he is HIV positive. It may be impossible for doctors to give such statements because of medical confidentiality," one source told AFP. The justice ministry said there were also legal complications over how to verify that the suspect transmitted AIDS with intent and prove that the woman contracted the disease from him. Although there is no specific legislation in Cyprus covering AIDS, there is a general law which states that a person knowingly spreading infectious diseases can be jailed for up to two years. A newspaper in British-identified the woman as Janette Elizabeth Pink, a 44-year-old divorcee and mother of two children. She has been hospitalised in Essex, northeast of London. The divorcee has appealed to Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind to ask the Cyprus authorities to prosecute the fisherman from the popular holiday resort of Ayia Napa.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION
Tel. 773111-19
PROGRAMME TWO
15:05 Cartoon — Moomin
15:25 Pumpkin Patch
15:45 Drama — Blue Heelers
16:30 Comedy — Big Brother/Lake
17:00 News Flash
17:02 Sciences Caravan
17:15 La Vie Devant Moi
17:30 Game show — Les Bons Genies
18:00 Serie — Police Des Polices
19:00 Le Journal
19:15 Faut Pas Rever
20:00 Tennis — U.S. Open 1996 (live)

PRAYER TIMES
04:50 Fajr
06:09 (Sunrise) Duha
12:34 Dhuhur
16:08 'Asr
18:59 Maghreb
20:18 'Isha

CHURCHES
St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweifeh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church Tel.
632785.
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation
Tel. 637440.
De la Salle Church Tel. 661656.
Terresanta Church Tel.
622266
Church of the Annunciation
Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 652826
Armenian Catholic Church
Tel. 771331.
Armenian Orthodox Church
Tel. 775261.
St. Ephraim Church Tel.

771751.
Amman International Church
Tel. 652526
Evangelical Lutheran Church
Tel. 824328.
German-speaking Evangelical
Congregation Tel. 845457
The Latter-Day Saints Tel.
654932.
Church of Nazareth Tel.
675691.
The Evangelical Local Church
in Amman Tel. 811295
English-speaking
Latin Catholics Parish Tel.
614190.

WEATHER
Bulletin supplied by the Department
of Meteorology:
A significant drop in temperatures
and rise in humidity is
expected under the effect of a
cold air mass affecting the King-
dom. Skies will be partly cloudy
and winds westerly moderate to
active. In Aqaba, winds will be
northerly moderate to active and
sea choppy.
Min/Max temp. 20/30
Aqaba 25/39
Deserts 18/34
Jordan Valley 25/38
Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 37, Aqaba 43 Humidity
readings: Amman 18 per cent,
Aqaba 17 per cent.

USEFUL
TELEPHONE
NUMBERS
Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111.
637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage Com-
plaints 897467

NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Fayez Dabbas 759155
Dr. Mazen Nball 830435
Dr. Fakhri Bilel 663412
Dr. Adnan Zaghloul 898140
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asena pharmacy 637055
Nairouchi pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Stmeisani pharmacy 847632
IRBID:
Dr. Ahmad Qana 281484
Al Quds pharmacy (—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Mazen Safarini 985832
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES
Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111.
637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage Com-
plaints 897467

Amman Municipality Com-
plaints 787111
Telephone Information (direc-
tory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone
Reparis 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs
..... 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority
..... 815615
Electric Power Company
..... 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-
53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-
53200

HOSPITALS
AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre
..... 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn
..... 644281/6
Aidileh Maternity, J. Amn.
..... 642411/2
Jabal Amman Maternity
..... 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani
..... 607071
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Muasher Hospital 667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37
Al-Abli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muasher
..... 777101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh

775111/26
Army, Marka 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 674155
The Arab Centre for Heart and
Special Surgery 865199
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital
..... 09983323
Zarqa National Hospital
..... 09900560
Ibn Sina Hospital 09986732
Al Hikam Modern Hospital
..... 09990990
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital
..... 02127555
Greek Catholic Hospital
..... 02127275
Ibn Al Nafees Hospital
..... 021247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital
..... 03314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER
QUEEN ALIA
INTERNATIONAL
AIRPORT
This information is supplied by
Royal Jordanian (RJ) information
department at the Queen Alia
International Airport Tel.
(08)53200 where it should
always be verified. Information
on other flights is obtained on
telephone (08) 52700 or (08)
523250.

ARRIVALS
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
09:50 Aqaba (QAIA) — proceeds
to Marka airport at 10:00 a.m.)

06:45 Dubai (add) (RJ)
07:45 Kuala Lumpur, Singapore
Abu Dhabi (add) (RJ)
08:00 Damascus (RJ)
10:20 Beirut (RJ)
10:30 New Delhi
(RJ)
10:30 Karachi, Dubai (RJ)
10:45 Abu Dhabi (RJ)
11:30 Colombo (RJ)
15:10 Istanbul (RJ)
15:45 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:10 Cairo (RJ)
18:00 Abu Dhabi (add) (RJ)
19:15 London, Berlin (RJ)
20:40 Vienna (RJ)
02:20 Riyadh (add) (RJ)
04:10 Riyadh (RJ)

Other Flights
03:00 Rome (AZ)
13:40 Muscat, Doha (GF)
14:00 Riyadh (SV)
15:00 Vienna (OS)
19:35 Amsterdam (RJ)
20:35 Cairo (MS)
20:50 Damascus, Paris (AF)
21:10 Beirut (ME)
21:15 London (BA)
22:00 Sanaa (TY)
23:35 Larnaca (CY)
23:55 London (KJ)
03:00 Kuwait (KL)
03:00 Vienna (OS)
03:30 Rome (AZ)
06:30 Tel Aviv (LY)

Royal Wings (RW) Flights
09:50 Aqaba (QAIA) — proceeds
to Marka airport at 10:00 a.m.)

DEPARTURES
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
06:35 Beirut (RJ)
09:45 Istanbul (RJ)
11:00 Abu Dhabi (add) (RJ)
12:00 Vienna (RJ)
12:30 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
12:30 Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)
13:00 Geneva, Madrid (RJ)
13:10 Paris (RJ)
13:15 Brussels, Amsterdam (RJ)
13:45 Cairo (RJ)
14:05 London (RJ)
15:10 Cairo (RJ)
17:30 Brussels, Amsterdam (RJ)
21:10 Larnaca (RJ)
21:10 Riyadh (add) (RJ)
21:20 Jeddah (RJ)
21:45 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
22:20 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
22:45 Dhahan (RJ)
23:00 Riyadh (RJ)

Other Flights
04:00 Athens (DA)
04:00 Rome (AZ)
08:45 Beirut (ME)
14:30 Abu Dhabi, Bahrain (GF)
15:30 Riyadh (SV)
16:00 Vienna (OS)
20:45 Kuwait (KL)
21:20 Cairo (MS)
23:00 Sanaa (TY)
23:30 Larnaca (CY)
23:55 Paris, Damascus (AF)
04:00 Amsterdam (KJ)
04:00 Rome (AZ)
04:30 Antalya (TK)

06:40 London (KJ)
07:25 Tel Aviv (LY)
Royal Wings (RW) Flights
20:30 Aqaba (RW)
HILJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN
Dep. Amman 8:00 a.m. every
Monday
Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every
Monday
Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every
Sunday
Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every
Sunday

MARKET PRICES
Upper/lower price in fils per kg.
Apple 700/500
Banana 600/600
Banana (mukhammar) 520/520
Banana (imported) 850/600
Carrot 160/90
Cauliflower 400/250
Cucumber (large) 240/140
Cucumber (small) 420/250
Eggplant 220/150
Fig 340/240
Garlic 650/400
Grapes 400/250
Lemon 520/400
Marrow (large) 250/150
Marrow (small) 450/300
Mulukiah 110/70
Onion (dry) 150/90
Okra 800/500
Pea 580/400
Peach 850/600
Pepper (hot) 340/200
Pepper (sweet) 460/260
Potato 350/200
String Bean 850/600
Sweet melon 350/200
Tomato 130/80
Water melon 200/140

Home News

Jordan Times, Saturday, September 7, 1996

3

Bahraini minister ends visit Economic, cultural ties to be strengthened

AMMAN (Petra) — Bahrain's Minister of Trade Ali Al Saleh Friday left Jordan at the end of a three day visit during which he signed the minutes of talks with government officials and announced that Bahrain and Jordan will organise a workshop soon to discuss ways to stimulate the role of the private sectors to promote bilateral ties.

Mr. Saleh made the announcement Thursday at a meeting with HRH Crown Prince Hassan in which he reviewed the discussions of the Jordanian-Bahraini committee co-chaired by himself and Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abul Ragheb.

Prince Hassan said that the two countries should begin joint efforts to promote economic and trade ties and work towards ensuring solidarity among the Arab countries in the face of the common challenges.

The Crown Prince called for interaction between the financial markets of the two countries, for cooperation in promoting investments and for the two sides to exchange expertise in banking, education, universities and many other fields.

Mr. Saleh, who earlier was received by His Majesty King Hussein,

stressed that his country was seeking to raise the level of close cooperation with Jordan in all fields. He told Prince Hassan that his country was hoping to create an Arab common market expressing hope that Jordan and Bahrain would take the first step to achieve that goal.

At the audience with the King, attended by Crown Prince Hassan, Chief of the Royal Court Awn Khasawneh and Mr. Abdul Ragheb, the Bahraini minister expressed his country's appreciation of Jordan's support for its endeavours in all fields.

The signed minutes included issues such as trade, industry, investments, financial markets, education and higher education, health, vocational training, and transport.

The joint committee called on the private sector in the two countries to benefit from the incentives offered them by the two sides and increase the volume of trade, form joint companies, and promote their cooperation in the exchange of agricultural and manufactured products.

The two sides agreed to take measures aimed at facilitating the flow of goods between the two

countries and removing customs barriers. They also agreed to organise trade fairs in either country.

In the industrial field the two sides said they will encourage the private sector to launch joint industries and agreed that a Bahraini industrial delegation should visit Jordan soon to try to benefit from the Jordanian experiment.

In vocational training, the two sides agreed to organise specialised training seminars and benefit from each other's facilities in vocational and technical training.

In education, they revived a 1972 agreement by which Jordan will provide Bahrain with teachers and educational supervisors at the schools, community colleges and university levels.

The two sides also agreed to promote their cooperation in matters related to pharmaceuticals, primary health care, nursing and medical services as well as medical training.

They agreed to form a follow up committee to ensure the implementation of the agreements and agreed to hold the committee's next meeting in Manama at a date to be fixed through diplomatic channels.

Government denies plan for fuel price hike; calls rumour of such 'unfounded'

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The government has no intention of raising the prices of fuel or seeking alternate sources of crude and fuel oil and shifting its present source [which is] Iraq, officials have reaffirmed.

"There is no intention to raise the price of any fuel," Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Hashem Dabbas told reporters last week. "Any report or suggestion that the government plans to raise fuel prices is completely unfounded."

The last time the government raised fuel prices was in 1989 in line with an International Monetary Fund (IMF) recommendation based on a finding that fuel prices in Jordan were unrealistic. That move sparked riots in the south, but the government did not lower the prices.

Independent sources said there was no stipulation in the ongoing IMF programme for any raise in the fuel prices except a "re-accounting" of the actual cost of oil consumed in Jordan to reflect on the Kingdom's fiscal budget.

"Those changes are only in the budgetary accounting practices and do not have any bearing whatsoever on fuel prices as far as

consumers are concerned," said an independent source.

Jordan imports all of its crude and fuel oil from Iraq — about 50,000 barrels of crude and 20,000/25,000 barrels of fuel oil (depending on the season) per day — under an exemption granted by the U.N. Sanctions Committee, which is overseeing the enforcement of international sanctions imposed on that country in 1990.

The Kingdom is getting the Iraqi oil on concessionary terms. Amman has been "buying" the oil by supplying food and medicine to Iraq, but Baghdad has run up a debt of about \$1.2 billion to the Kingdom in unsettled payment for Jordanian exports to Iraq.

Officials meanwhile affirmed that Jordan has no intention to seek alternate sources for its oil needs.

"The present arrangement with Iraq suits Jordan's requirements, and the government finds no reason whatsoever to change it," said a senior official.

Jordan was forced to import oil from Syria and Yemen for a short period in early 1991, when Iraqi oil installations were damaged by allied bombings during the war over

Kuwait. The difficulties encountered in transporting Syrian and Yemeni oil to Jordan and the requirement of cash payments for the imports proved that Jordan's best source of oil was indeed Iraq.

Saudi Arabia closed an oil pipeline to Jordan in September 1990 and has not since re-opened it.

Even if the Saudis were to reopen the pipeline today, they would demand globally recognised market prices and cash payment for the oil, according to observers.

Mr. Dabbas, minister of energy and mineral resources, also said last week that the government was anxious to ensure that two foreign companies start oil exploration work in Jordan as soon as possible.

The government has signed agreements with two companies but the accords are subject to parliamentary approval. The deals were supposed to have been debated and approved by Parliament during its extraordinary session this summer.

But the session was terminated on Aug. 16, before the issue was scheduled for debate, following unrest in the south protesting an increase in bread prices.

"We are anxious to see the companies start explo-

ration work in Jordan," including parts of the Dead Sea, where an American firm has obtained a contract, Mr. Dabbas told a press conference.

Interest has been mounting in Jordan over prospects of oil finds in the Dead Sea after Israel announced last month that one of its companies had found oil in the Israeli side of the Dead Sea and that crude oil had started flowing there at around 450 barrels per day.

With the termination of

the extraordinary session, parliamentary approval of the Jordanian accords with the foreign oil companies could come only after the legislature is convened for the annual regular session in October or November.

As such, said Mr. Dabbas, the government may opt to "withdraw the bills sent to Parliament" and approve the agreements through temporary laws so that the companies could start work without delay.

'Indications of oil in Dead Sea Area'

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Hashem Dabbas affirmed Thursday that there were positive indications of oil reserves in Jordan, especially in the Dead Sea area. He said that the natural Resources Authority at the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources will soon conduct exploration activities in cooperation with two U.S. companies in the eastern areas of the Kingdom near the Jordanian-Iraqi borders and at the Dead Sea.

Dr. Dabbas Thursday spoke during a morning visit to the governorate of Balqa where he inaugurated six electric transformer stations at a total cost of JD 500,000. He said that the ministry has heretofore spent JD 27 million on rural electricity projects, utilising funds collected through allotted taxes for rural areas collected through the monthly electricity bill. The National Electric Power Company collects an additional one fils per kilowatt of electricity utilised, and deposits the sum in a special fund used to finance rural electric project.

Minister denies report of governor's resignation

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of Interior Awad Khleifat has rejected accusations that he had forced any citizen to pledge allegiance to the regime and dismissed a press report that the resignation last month of the governor of Balqa was related to the accusations.

In a letter he sent to the weekly Shihaan newspaper, which carried the report last week, the minister said the information contained in the article was "completely false and fabricated" and asked that the paper reveal the identity of the source for the "distorted report, which aims at inciting hatred among the people."

Shihaan had reported that the governor resigned

because he had rejected a request from the minister asking him to solicit cables from citizens pledging allegiance (to the regime), after the Karak riots on Aug. 16.

"My policy is based on the belief that allegiance cannot be forced or developed through threats... but can be built by following fair, just policies without favouritism and willfulness," Dr. Khleifat said.

"I challenge anybody (or governor) to say that I asked him to do such a thing," said the minister.

After the riots, many citizens as well as official and private organisations in various parts of the Kingdom placed advertisements pledging allegiance to the regime.

Suspect apprehended in death of Karak girl

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Karak police Friday announced that they have indicted a 37-year-old man in connection with the murder of his sister on Sept. 1 in the town of El.

A police official told the Jordan Times Friday evening that the suspect, whom he refused to identify, confessed to killing his sister Rania Ibrahim Madi, 16, claiming it as a crime of honour and then reportedly set his father's house ablaze to conceal the evidence.

"The suspect told us that he killed his sister to cleanse the family's honour," said the official who declined to further elaborate.

Ms. Ibrahim's body was discovered after fire-fighters extinguished the blaze which was declared to have been deliberately ignited in her father's home.

An autopsy performed on the woman's body confirmed that she was strangled by a wire. The autopsy also revealed that 50 per cent of the woman's body was covered with second-degree burns.

Ms. Ibrahim became the ninth woman killed in the Kingdom in an alleged

crime of honour since the beginning of the year.

Meanwhile, Amman police Friday apprehended three men who Thursday claiming they were police officers, tried to rape a woman at a farm near Madaba, according to official sources.

The source said that the woman and her husband were lured to the farm by a fourth person, who convinced the couple of his intention to employ them at his farm.

Upon reaching the farm, the source maintained, the couple were met by three men who claimed to be security officers and then attempted to rape the woman.

"The couple begged the men not to rape the woman as she was sick, and promised to return the following day," the source added.

After being released, the couple headed to the nearest police station and filed a complaint, said the source.

After intense investigations, police apprehended five suspects, who, according to the sources, confessed.

Man declared guilty of premeditated murder

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Within two weeks of the first anniversary of the crime, the Amman Criminal Court Thursday sentenced a 25-year-old man to death after he was found guilty of the premeditated murder of a man in Dabab Hanout near Ma'an.

The court tribunal, comprised of Judges Abdul Ruhman Tawfiq, Mifteh Mobeiddin and Ismael Hmouz, found Ibrahim Odeh guilty of murdering Abdullah Bakhit, 25, on Sept. 15, 1995.

According to the prosecutor's charge sheet, Mr. Odeh, who was declared to have plotted to kill Mr. Bakhit, lured the victim to a valley and shot him once in the head with a Lama pistol, then fled the scene.

The victim's deteriorated body was discovered four months later by a shepherd in the valley of Dabab Hanout. The vic-

tim was reported missing by his family on Sept. 15, 1995.

Earlier reports indicated that Mr. Odeh, who confessed to police after being apprehended on Jan. 16, 1996 on suspicion of killing Mr. Bakhit, had accidentally shot the victim.

The suspect then told police that the reason he did not inform the authorities is that he was afraid of vengeance.

But on Thursday, the Criminal Court ruled out the possibility of an accidental shooting on the basis of a weapon's expert's testimony as well as contradictions surfacing in the defendant's various confessions.

When interrogated by the authorities in January, the suspect said that he had no knowledge of the victim's whereabouts, the prosecution charged.

But after being faced by evidence that he was the last person to be seen with the victim, he con-

fessed to the shooting and claimed that he accidentally shot the victim, but that the safety catch of his pistol was locked in place.

In his testimony in court, the weapon's expert stated that it is not possible for a bullet to be fired from a Lama pistol if the safety catch is on, the court said.

"The defendant's contradictory testimonies led us to believe that he plotted to kill Mr. Bakhit," Judge Tawfiq said.

Thursday's sentencing brings the number of people sentenced to death by the Criminal Court to 17, including two women, since the beginning of 1996. Seven people have already been put to death since January of this year. Last year, eight people were executed in the Kingdom.

The verdict will automatically be reviewed by a higher court within 30 days.

Abbadi case gains momentum

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Interesting developments have surfaced vis-a-vis three cases which have gripped the attention of the Jordanian public as of late.

In the case of former deputy Ahmad Ouidi Abbadi, who is charged with undermining national unity, Judge Tawfiq Quesi postponed the case indefinitely upon a request made by Mr. Abbadi's attorney Ahmad Momani.

Mr. Abbadi, a columnist, is also charged with inciting people to criminal acts and fuelling bigotry through his writings in the local weekly tabloid Shihaan.

Last July, in responding to a parliament call urging authorities to take action against published articles which may be considered damaging to national unity, His Majesty King Hussein demonstrated his support by criticising some writers who, it was felt, attempted to undermine that unity.

On Aug. 8, the scheduled date for Mr. Abbadi to appear in court, some 400 of his supporters stood in front of the courthouse downtown and shouted slogans in favour of his stance.

In the case of the former honorary council of Sri Lanka in Jordan Tawfiq Abu Khajil, who is standing trial in a baby sale scam, involving Sri Lankan domestic help, the Criminal Court heard two more witnesses then postponed the case until Sept. 10 for the final cross-examination of two witnesses in the case.

According to judicial sources the final two witnesses are currently abroad "and if they do not show up in court (for the) next session, the court will depend on their earlier testimonies."

Formal charges pressed against Mr. Abu Khajil, a Jordanian businessman who served as Sri Lanka's honorary consul until he was fired by the Colombo government subsequent to his arrest, include: use of forged documents, issuance of false certificates, sale of babies (illegal under a 1929 law against slavery), possession of unlicensed firearms, import of illegal wireless devices, abuses of trust and forgery of a government seal.

Also standing trial beside Mr. Abu Khajil, is a Sri Lankan citizen named Anourma G.L., who is accused of agreeing to sell her baby to adoptive par-

ents and Andrea Busfani, 37, Mr. Abu Khajil's secretary, who is being tried on absentia.

Meanwhile, in another case, Amman Criminal Court Prosecutor General Zuhair Atiyat began the questioning of a 24-year-old man, Abdul Rahman F., suspected of the murder of a physician in Tlaa Al Adi in August, after the case was transferred by the Sweileh prosecutor-general, who was then handling the case.

The victim, Iman Yassin, who worked for the Islamic Hospital in Amman, was in her flat in the Fardouse Housing Complex when her alleged assailant, who worked in building maintenance, sneaked into her apartment and attempted to sexually assault the woman.

A struggle ensued in which the woman's head reportedly struck a radiator. According to forensics expert the blow caused her death.

The man fell under suspicion by police when scratches to his neck and various wounds were spotted by the police as possibly resulting from some sort of altercation, according to official reports.

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

* Wrought-iron exhibition by Salim Bandak at Kan Zaman (Tel. 736449), until Sept. 15.

* Works by Batoul Al Fakiki at Baladna Art Gallery, Gardens Street (Tel. 687598), until Sept. 11.

* Summer '96 exhibition at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh, until Oct. 8.



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Dole loses key advisers; polls show Clinton surge

WASHINGTON (R) — Republican candidate Bob Dole lost two top consultants Thursday in a new blow to his struggling campaign as new polls suggested President Bill Clinton could be heading for an election rout.

Don Sipple and Mike Murphy, the two men charged with creating Sen. Dole's crucial political advertisements, quit in what appeared to be an internal power struggle with campaign manager Scott Reed.

"A strategic decision was made to bring the ad group more directly into the overall campaign structure under Scott Reed," campaign spokesman Nelson Warfield said.

Mr. Warfield tried to put the best face on the shake-up, describing it as a "move forward in the creative process." But it suggested a campaign in some disarray, seemingly unable to close a

yawning gap in the polls with Mr. Clinton.

The Dole campaign was to begin airing soon a five-minute commercial crafted by Mr. Sipple to reintroduce the candidate to the American people as a man of personal sacrifice.

A new Reuters poll conducted by John Zogby Group International found Mr. Clinton leading by 15 percentage points among likely voters after receiving a double boost, first from last week's Democratic convention and then from his decision to order air strikes against Iraq.

A new CNN/USA Today/Gallup poll showed a similar gap with just two months to go to election day on Nov. 5.

In the Reuters-Zogby poll, Mr. Clinton led Sen. Dole by 48.2 to 33.3 per cent. Texas billionaire Ross Perot, the candidate of his own Reform Party, had 5.9 per

cent.

Mr. Clinton now leads among every income group, every ethnic group, every age group and in every region of the country. He leads by 10 points among men and 19 points among women. He also leads on 10 of 12 top campaign issues.

"As the campaign officially starts, this is an impressive lead for Mr. Clinton, and given his remarkable dominance among most sub-groups, this has the potential for a rout similar to those in 1964, 1972 and 1984," pollster John Zogby said.

President Lyndon Johnson swamped Republican Barry Goldwater in 1964, winning more than 61 per cent of the popular vote. Presidents Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan each won 49 of the 50 states in their election triumphs of 1972 and 1984.

The Reuters-Zogby poll, conducted on Sept. 2-4,

questioned 1,019 registered voters and had a margin of error of plus or minus 3.2 percentage points.

The CNN/USA Today/Gallup poll of 780 likely voters showed Mr. Clinton leading Sen. Dole by 17 points, 53 to 36 per cent, with Mr. Perot trailing on five per cent.

The poll, with a margin of error of plus or minus four percentage points, showed Sen. Dole trailing only by one point among men but by 32 points among women.

In more bad news for Sen. Dole, a new poll in the most populous state of California showed Mr. Clinton leading him by a huge 22 percentage points, 55 to 33 per cent.

Mr. Clinton meanwhile campaigned in Florida, a state no Democratic presidential candidate has won since Jimmy Carter in 1976 but where polls show he is slightly ahead of Sen. Dole.

The president sounded familiar themes on education in his first speech in Tampa, including hooking school rooms up to the Internet and a \$10,000 tax break for college tuition.

"A big part of building a bridge to the 21st century is building a bridge big enough to give every single boy and girl in America a chance to live up to their God-given abilities," he told several hundred students at a high school.

He was to head later to Broward County near Miami to speak to senior citizens on health care and his support for a bill to bar health maintenance organizations from restricting what treatment procedures doctors may discuss with patients.



President Bill Clinton (left) greets the crowd during a campaign rally at Hillsborough High School in Tampa. Mr. Clinton is making stops in four Florida cities during the trip (Reuters photo).

3 found guilty in U.S. plane bomb-plot trial

NEW YORK (AFP) — Ramzi Youssef of Pakistan and two others charged with plotting to bomb U.S. commercial airliners were found guilty in federal court here.

The defendants, who face a maximum sentence of life in prison, remained seated and showed no emotion as the verdicts were read.

Judge Kevin Thomas Duffy set sentencing for Dec. 5. Mr. Youssef, Abdul Hakim Murad, 28, also of Pakistan and Wali Khan Amin Shah, 29, of Afghanistan were found guilty of plotting to place bombs aboard U.S. airliners on routes between California and Asia.

Mr. Youssef was also found guilty for the bombing of a Philippine Airlines plane on a flight between Manila and Tokyo on Dec. 11, 1994 in which a Japanese passenger was killed.

Mr. Youssef's legal adviser Roy Kulesar said his client, who defended himself in the trial, will appeal the verdict.

The White House welcomed the conviction. "We are delighted to see justice done by this jury," said Michael McCurry, spokesman for President Bill Clinton.

The verdict came shortly before an Airport Safety Commission set up in the wake of the TWA Flight 800 crash urged the Federal government to spend more than \$300 million on security measures.

Mr. Youssef is further accused of being the mastermind behind the 1993 World Trade Centre bombing here and is to go on trial in that case later.

Mr. Shah was also found guilty on one count of trying to escape from prison.

All three defendants were found guilty on seven counts in connection with the plan to blow up airliners.

During the trial that started on May 13, Mr. Youssef claimed he was framed by Philippine and Pakistani authorities trying to please the U.S. government.

He insisted he was in the hands of the Pakistani Military Police between November 1994 and February 1995 at the time prosecutors said the bombing scheme was hatched.

He also claimed confessions he made to Federal Bureau of Investigation agents were made only as part of a deal with the agents to protect his family in Pakistan.

Mr. Shah's lawyer, David Greenfield, had aggressively attacked the credibility of evidence supplied against his client by the Philippine National Police (PNP).

Mr. Greenfield accused Philippine authorities of planting Mr. Shah's fingerprints on documents and tampering with Mr. Youssef's laptop computer, which contained key evidence linking Mr. Shah to the conspiracy. The computer was seized from Mr. Youssef's Manila apartment.

According to the indictment, heavily based on information from Philippine police, the plot to bomb the planes was discovered after a Jan. 6, 1995 fire in a Manila apartment.

When officials raided the residence they said they discovered bomb-making materials, and seized the portable computer, which held detailed information on U.S. flights.

In his closing arguments, Mr. Youssef claimed the Philippines "is a regime where law enforcement officers are instructed to commit crimes," referring to a Philippine police officer who admitted having lied under orders from his superiors about the evidence found in the apartment.

"I think the most damaging evidence was the computer," said Mr. Kulesar, adding that he was surprised by the fact the prosecution "made a big issue of the fact it was encoded."

Mr. Youssef was extradited from Pakistan in Feb. 1995. The next month, Mr. Murad was extradited from Pakistan, while Mr. Shah was extradited from Malaysia in December.

H. Kong's top judge quits to run for post-1997 chief

HONG KONG (AFP) — Hong Kong's chief justice resigned Friday after announcing his decision to run as the territory's first chief executive after the handover to China in 1997.

Chief Justice Sir Ti Liang Yang is to step down as Hong Kong's top judge on Nov. 4, a government spokesman said.

In a letter to Governor Chris Patten, Judge Yang said that following his decision to accept nomination to the post of chief executive of the Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong — as the territory will be called after the handover — "constitutional propriety" required him to resign as chief justice.

Mr. Patten accepted and respected Judge Yang's decision to resign wishing him well, a statement said. "Sir Ti Liang has given long and dedicated service to Hong Kong during his 40 years of service with the judiciary," Mr. Patten said.

"As the first local chief justice, he has led the judiciary through many changes in recent years."

"The whole community is grateful for his record of public service. I wish him and Lady Yang every happiness in the years to come," said the governor.

Noel Power will continue as acting chief justice. The three favourites to succeed Judge Yang are reportedly Appeals Court judges, Henry Litton, Benjamin Liu and Charles Ching.

Born in Shanghai, Judge Yang, 67, became the first ethnic-Chinese chief justice of Hong Kong in more than 150 years of British rule in 1988. His contract expires in February next year.

After Judge Yang announced his decision to run for the post, he was urged by pro-democracy legislators to resign immediately in order to maintain judicial independence.

Legislator Martin Lee, chairman of Hong Kong's largest political party, the Democratic Party, welcomed Judge Yang's deci-

sion to step down, but expressed "regret" that he did not quit "immediately" after Tuesday's announcement.

"It is important to give people the confidence that Hong Kong's judiciary is independent," said Mr. Lee. Judge Yang's resignation was also noted with "regret" by the judiciary which said in a statement that "his patience and fairness in the exercise of judicial office have been an example to us all."

"In his term as chief justice, his administrative and procedural reforms have set the judiciary upon a course which will place it in the forefront of common law jurisdictions as we proceed into the 21st century," the judiciary said in the statement.

Judge Yang decided to run for the post, replacing Patten, over the weekend after veteran pro-China figure Xu Simun said he would nominate the top judge and that Judge Yang had agreed to stand for selection.

Mr. Xu said in nominating Judge Yang in Beijing Tuesday: "He (Yang) knows the law. Hong Kong has to be ruled by law, not businessmen." Many were unhappy about the idea of a business person running Hong Kong, he added.

Another potential candidate, shipping magnate Tung Chee-Hwa who heads Hong Kong's giant Orient Overseas Container Line Ltd., has remained tight-lipped about whether he would run.

Press reports suggested Mr. Tung's hesitation was due to objections from business tycoons close to Beijing, such as billionaire Li Ka-Shing.

Mr. Tung, currently deputy director of the China-formed Preparatory Committee handling the setting up of Hong Kong's post-1997 government, quit Mr. Patten's advisory panel, the Executive Council, on June 3 in a move widely seen as a prelude to a campaign to become chief executive.



German Chancellor Helmut Kohl (right) gestures as U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher looks on prior to talks Friday. Mr. Christopher will explain the U.S. position on the missile attacks on Iraq and discuss Mr. Kohl's visit to Russia for talks with President Yeltsin (Reuters photo).

Christopher sees Kohl before speech

BONN (R) — U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher met German Chancellor Helmut Kohl Friday for talks likely to focus on the new shape of European security in the post-cold war era.

The meeting came on the eve of Mr. Kohl's hastily-arranged trip to see President Boris Yeltsin in Russia Saturday, a visit which has taken on added significance with the news that President Yeltsin is to undergo a heart operation this month.

Mr. Christopher was likely to add final touches to a major speech he was making later in the day setting out U.S. policy on European security and Russia's place in that framework.

He was to deliver the speech in Stuttgart on the 50th anniversary of an address in the city by then Secretary of State James Byrnes on reconstructing Europe after World War II.

Mr. Byrnes made clear then that the United States wanted to see vanquished Germany unified and reintegrated into Europe and able to help the continent's economic revival.

"This is a time of similar importance as it was in 1946," Mr. Christopher told reporters travelling with him from Washington.

"Then we had won the war but not won the peace. Now we are in a situation

where we have prevailed in the cold war but we've not fully made the adjustment and adaptation to the peace."

He said he intend to use his speech "to try to discuss overall European security issues...as (NATO) adaptation...enlargement...and the NATO/Russia relationship."

Mr. Christopher discussed security issues with British and French leaders in London and Paris Thursday and planned to cover similar topics in Bonn with Mr. Kohl, who met Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov Thursday.

U.S. officials said the speech, which was still being drafted, might break new ground but key points were still being negotiated with Washington and European capitals.

Mr. Christopher described the speech as the centrepiece of his five-day trip to Europe at a time when the United States and its allies are about to take important decisions about the future of the Western alliance and its relationship with Russia and former Communist Bloc states.

Bonn believes it has an important role in preparing that relationship, and Mr. Primakov told German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel Wednesday that Russia wanted to start a constructive dialogue with the West on Europe's security framework.

NATO foreign ministers will discuss this in December and a NATO summit meeting is to follow in early 1997. One decision to be made is which former Warsaw Pact countries should become the first new post-cold war members of the alliance.

Mr. Christopher's tour so far has been dominated by the crisis over Iraq, precipitated when Iraqi troops advanced to intervene in fighting in the Kurdish-controlled north and Washington retaliated with air strikes against Iraqi military targets.

He failed Thursday to win French support for a U.S. decision to extend a no-fly zone in Southern Iraq to cut down Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's freedom of military movement.

But the U.S.-led coalition that ousted Iraq from Kuwait in 1991 was salvaged when Paris agreed to continue working with the United States and Britain to patrol the original, more restricted southern zone and another no-fly zone in the north.

Mr. Kohl's government has strongly backed the U.S. action.

Mr. Christopher returns to London at the weekend for talks Sunday with Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy before flying home to Washington.

Hashimoto says snap election hinges on Okinawa meeting

TOKYO (AFP) — Japan's Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto told fellow coalition party leaders Friday that any decision on a snap election would not be made until after he meets with the governor of Okinawa next week.

His remarks came only two days before Okinawa votes on the future of U.S. bases on the island and followed reports that he decided to dissolve parliament over the next month for an early poll in either late October or early November.

Mr. Hashimoto, who heads the conservative Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), the biggest party in the coalition, initially played down the reports, as did several ministers attending Friday morning's regular cabinet meeting.

But by late morning, a hastily-arranged meeting had been called between Mr. Hashimoto and former Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama who heads the left-wing Social Democratic Party (SDP) as well as New Party Sakigake leader Shioichi Ide.

"I told Mr. Murayama and Mr. Ide that I don't have time to think about dissolving parliament for a general election at a time when the Okinawa issue is entering a crucial phase," Jiji Press quoted Mr. Hashimoto as telling reporters at his official residence. "I told them I needed their help."

Mr. Murayama said Hashimoto "told us he is not thinking about a dissolution for the time being so as to tackle the issue of Okinawa."

"We were asked for cooperation and we promised it," the SDP leader said. "Generally speaking, parliament should be dissolved after next year's budget is compiled. But anything can happen in parliament and I have told party members to prepare for any contingency."

Chief Cabinet Secretary Seiichi Kajiyama, a senior LDP member and the government's official spokesman, made similar remarks.

"The ruling parties are united in tackling the Okinawa issue. For the time being, the dissolution of parliament is not in sight," he said.

Mr. Hashimoto told reporters earlier Friday that he could "not decide anything" until after Tuesday's meeting with Okinawa Governor Masahide Ota, who has been refusing to sign documents forcibly renewing land leases for U.S. bases.

Shusei Tanaka, the Economic Planning Agency chief and a senior member of Sakigake, the smallest party in the coalition, said Mr. Hashimoto dismissed the reports "with a strong tone" during the cabinet meeting. Finance Minister Wataru Kubo, a senior SDP member, made similar remarks.

The reports in the Yomiuri, Asahi, Nihon Keizai and Sankei newspapers said Mr. Hashimoto was likely to convene an extraordinary session of parliament in late September or earlier October and immediately dissolve the lower house.

The Asahi and the Nihon Keizai said the election date would be either Oct. 20 or 27 while the Yomiuri sug-

gested Oct. 27 or Nov. 10.

Under the constitution, an election must be held within 40 days of the lower house being dissolved. While the term for the lower house expires in July next year, speculation about an early election has been rife for months.

Coalition sources told the Asahi that Mr. Hashimoto made the decision in view of growing calls within the LDP for an early poll.

New Frontier Party leader Ichiro Ozawa and Japan Communist Party Secretary General Kazuo Shii meanwhile welcomed the reports of the early election.

"We have been asserting that an early general election should be held to seek the judgement of the people," Mr. Ozawa was quoted as telling reporters.

Mr. Shii, whose party has been gaining ground in recent months, told a luncheon in Tokyo that the government "should convene an extraordinary parliament session in September and we should ask the people's judgement."

The opposition New Frontier Party was earlier hit by the news that Hajime Funada, a former cabinet minister, had offered his resignation Friday.

The up-and-coming opposition member had been expected to form an alliance with Yukio Hatoyama, who left Sakigake last week to set up a new party with his younger brother Kunio who is also from the New Frontier Party. But Mr. Funada said Friday he would run as an independent in the next election.

Man kills himself because 2nd child was a daughter

BEIJING (AFP) — A Chinese farmer from the eastern province of Zhejiang has committed suicide because his wife gave birth to a second daughter and not the male heir he had craved. The Liberation Daily said Friday that 36-year-old Zhu killed himself last month by drinking agricultural pesticide after his wife of 10 years produced a second daughter. China's strict population control policy mandates only one child per city-dwelling couple, while those in the countryside are normally permitted two. Although Beijing has launched a number of campaigns to encourage Chinese people to give equal value to girls and boys there is still a strong preference for males, especially in the countryside.

Belgium issues arrest warrant over freezer bodies

BRUSSELS (R) — Belgium Thursday issued an international arrest warrant for a Lebanese man suspected of killing his wife and two other women and hiding their bodies in the freezer of his restaurant. "An international arrest warrant has been asked for and received," a spokesman for the Brussels prosecutor told Reuters. The bodies of the women, who have not yet been formally identified, were found Tuesday by bailiffs coming to remove property from the restaurant, which closed suddenly last month. Belgian police named the man they were seeking as Ghassan Bou Ziab, aged 41, who was last seen by neighbours in the middle of last month. A spokesman said they were also looking for Mr. Bou Ziab's two children, aged ten and six, and his brother. Police sources said the bodies were probably those of the two men's wives and a 70-year-old woman who lived in an apartment above the restaurant. The Baalbek Restaurant, where the bodies were found, lies in the heart of Brussels diplomatic district and was well known among the international community for its Lebanese cooking.

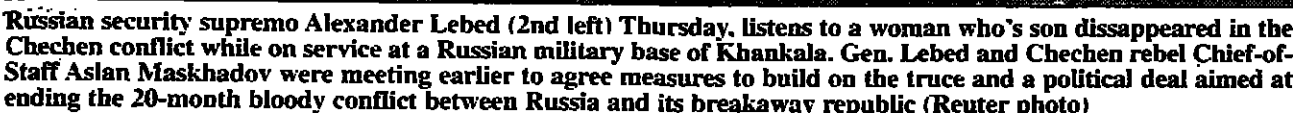
Cook jailed for killing amorous boss

HONG KONG (R) — A Chinese dimsum cook was jailed for life by a Hong Kong court for killing his boss and carving up her body after claiming she had become too amorous, a newspaper said Friday. The chef, Zeng Liang-Xin from mainland China, screamed for mercy as a judge sentenced him to life imprisonment Thursday. The South China Morning Post said Mr. Zeng had told the court he accidentally killed Wong Miu-Kuen, the 37-year-old manager of the restaurant in which he worked, after she offered him money for sex. Wong died when her head bashed a bunk bed after she was shoved to the floor, Mr. Zeng said. He admitted stealing the woman's jewels as he hacked off her head and chopped her up in an attempt to conceal her death.

Man dies after being pushed over Hong Kong's peak

HONG KONG (AFP) — A 72-year-old man fell to his death Tuesday after he and his wife were pushed over the side of Hong Kong's Victoria Peak after being robbed, a police spokesman said. The man was certified dead at a hospital while his 50-year-old wife was being treated of injuries. The peak district is a top-of-the-market residential area which in recent years has become a magnet for burglaries by illegal immigrants from China. Police said a search had been started but the identities of the two attackers was not known.

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Russian security supremo Alexander Lebed (2nd left) Thursday, listens to a woman whose son disappeared in the Chechen conflict while on service at a Russian military base of Khankala. Gen. Lebed and Chechen rebel Chief-of-Staff Aslan Maskhadov were meeting earlier to agree measures to build on the truce and a political deal aimed at ending the 20-month bloody conflict between Russia and its breakaway republic (Reuters photo)

ZAGREB (R) — A strong earthquake shook Croatia's Adriatic tourist coast Thursday night, injuring one person and causing substantial damage, state radio and witnesses reported Friday.

The tremor measuring 6.0 on the Richter scale hit at 10:44 p.m. (2044 GMT) and its epicentre was between the southern Adriatic resort of Dubrovnik and the town of Ston to the north.

The old town of Ston collapsed like a castle made of cards," Eduard Cengija, head of Dubrovnik police, said after inspecting the site, adding that a number of people had been evacuated from the area.

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The earth is still shaking. People are afraid and in panic. Everybody is on the streets and they spent the night in their cars," he said.

The radio reported a girl was seriously injured in the town of Slano but doctors at Dubrovnik Hospital said no one had been admitted so far.

Croatian Television showed pictures of Ston, 50 kilometres north of Dubrovnik, with buildings half-destroyed and people wrapped in woollen blankets walking around streets littered with rubble.

It said almost 80 per cent of residential buildings in the town were destroyed by the tremor, which knocked out power and caused landslides blocking the coastal road to Dubrovnik.

No official assessment of the damage has been made yet.

"We first heard a number of small tremors and then there was a big bang which started smashing everything around," a Ston resident Ante Glumicic told the HRT. Ivica Sovic of the Zagreb Institute of Seismology told Reuters at least 13 aftershocks were recorded in the area up until 7 a.m. (0500 GMT) Friday.

Croatian radio said the earthquake was also felt on the Dalmatian Islands of Brac and Hvar to the north and inland at Imotski and Sini.

Buildings were rocking back and forth in Makarska, a coastal town some 160 kilometres north of Dubrovnik.

The tremor could be felt hundreds of kilometres to the west in the Bosnian capital Sarajevo.

No damage was reported in Dubrovnik, a famous mediaeval town dubbed "the pearl of the Adriatic."

An employee of the Hotel Argentina in Dubrovnik's old town said frightened residents rushed out of buildings and gathered on the street after the quake struck.

BUDAPEST (R) — Pope John Paul said on arrival in Hungary Friday for a two-day visit that the people of Hungary needed patience during painful times after regaining their freedom from dictatorship.

"The optimism linked to the historic fall of ideology has unfortunately been very short-lived," he told an audience at Hungary's Ferihegy Airport. "It has been replaced by a troublesome period of difficulty which in Hungary has marked and continues to mark the life of everyone."

The 76-year-old Pontiff, speaking in both Hungarian and English, said the people of Hungary must not be discouraged.

"After the tragic events of this century which is coming to an end we should not be surprised if the rebirth and hoped-for development require time," he said.

"The disastrous consequences of the long years of dictatorship can be overcome materially and spiritually only with patient and persevering commitment on the part of everyone, especially the younger generation."

The Pope spoke clearly from his podium on the airport tarmac, concentrating intently on his Hungarian notes.

Earlier he had looked in reasonable health as he walked steadily down the steps of the Akitalia plane and was greeted under unusually chilly grey skies by Hungarian President Arpad Goncz.

Two girls presented him with flowers in the Vatican colours of yellow and white.

He did not kiss the ground, a regular feature of his trips, as he had already visited Hungary in 1991.

The Pope, who hopes to lead the Roman Catholic Church into the third millennium, was to attend a ceremony Friday to mark the 1,000th anniversary of a Benedictine Monastery at Pannonhalma in western Hungary.

On Saturday he celebrates a huge outdoor mass in the nearby city of Győr on the River Danube, and meets Hungarian bishops before returning to Rome that evening.

The trip, the Pope's 73rd abroad, follows a fresh scare about his health in mid-August when he entered hospital briefly for a battery of sophisticated medical tests.

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CALCUTTA (AFP) — Mother Teresa sang for joy Friday after bullying doctors into allowing her home following her recovery from life-threatening heart problems, close associates said.

The 86-year-old Nobel Peace laureate, said by doctors to have been 60 seconds away from death when her heart failed two weeks ago, sang a hymn as she was stretched into her lodgings at the Missionaries of Charity headquarters after leaving hospital.

Sister Priscilla, one of Mother Teresa's closest associates, said: "There is a great atmosphere of joy and rejoicing. Everybody is very happy."

"As mother entered she sang a hymn — 'Jesus I love you with all my heart,' she sang in a strong, clear voice. She blessed us and said 'I am very happy to be back with you,' she was taken up to her room and the doctors told us she had to rest for two more days."

Doctor Sudipta Sen, one of a six-strong medical team who treated the Roman Catholic missionary at Woodlands Nursing Home, confirmed Mother Teresa's heart had stopped beating on Aug. 21, 24 hours after she was admitted.

"Her heart was irregular for between one-and-a-half to two minutes. At a time like that, every second seems an hour and, looking back, she was a minute away from death," he said.

"If this has happened outside the hospital, or even outside the intensive care unit, I don't think she would have survived."

Doctor Ashim Bardhan, Mother Teresa's personal physician, admitted the medical team had given in to her incessant demands to be discharged after she had also recovered from malaria and a chest infection.

"We discharged mother on her own request. Initially we wanted to keep her until Saturday to make her a little stronger. She obviously had her own way," he said.

"Before leaving the hospital she thanked all of us, blessed us and told us, 'don't worry, God will take care of me. I will follow your instructions.'"

Mother Teresa, awarded the Nobel Prize in 1979 for her missionary work in the Calcutta slums, left Woodlands at 5:30 a.m. (23:50 GMT).

When she arrived 20 minutes later at the order's headquarters, in one of Calcutta's busiest areas, she had to be taken by stretcher to her room because the lane was too narrow for the ambulance.

Dr. Dinamani Banerjee, another of the Woodlands team, said: "Her pulse rate is now normal for her age, between 72 and 80. It was more than 100 at the worst time but has been controlled with medicine. Her chest infection is completely cleared."

He said there was still some lung infection, caused by pressure from mother Teresa's permanently stooped posture, but said it would not pose a problem, adding: "We have to be careful about reinfection of malaria or fever. She has to regain some more strength."

Mother Teresa founded the Missionaries of Charity order in 1950 to care for the destitute and dying of the city. The order now has 4,000 sisters and 400 brothers as well as about 600 hospitals and hospices in 126 countries.

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MYRTLE BEACH, South Carolina (AFP) — Hurricane Fran has killed at least nine people since it slammed into the U.S. east coast, packing fierce winds and driving rain, officials said Friday.

Seven of the deaths attributed to the storm occurred in North Carolina, two in South Carolina. Cable News Network said.

Fran, the sixth storm of the 1996 hurricane season, slammed into North Carolina's Cape Fear at around 8:00 p.m. Thursday (0000 GMT Friday), barreling through Southport, then Wilmington, as it moved quickly northward.

On landfall, maximum wind speed was clocked at 185 kilometres (114 miles) per hour, but a few hours later, as Fran moved further inland it was downgraded to a tropical storm by Florida's National Hurricane Centre, with winds slowing to 100 kilometres (65 miles) per hour.

Tom Ditt, a spokesman for North Carolina Emergency Management told CNN that the damage wrought by the hurricane was widespread, adding most of the seven deaths in the state were the result of storm-related traffic accidents.

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GROZNY, Russia (AFP) — Chechens marked the fifth anniversary of their fateful bid for independence Friday and mourned its terrible cost, while hoping that peace had finally come.

The rebel president, Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, addressed about 5,000 people gathered in the central square of the capital Grozny, surrounded by acres of rubble and the skeletons of apartment buildings, saying "thanks to God we have managed to get peace."

"We must not doubt that we have succeeded. We wanted peace for a long time and we asked the whole world to stop the war, but no one helped us. ... But today, our hearts weep for those who have died," he said.

He called for forgiveness in the wake of last week's peace accord, which stopped the war and promised the Chechens a chance to decide on their independence bid in five years time.

There are widespread fears that when Russians troops begin pulling out of the Muslim Caucasus republic, Chechens who fought the Russians will turn on those who worked for Moscow.

But Mr. Yandarbiyev urged restraint, saying "we must pardon those who shed blood in the name of the pro-Russian authorities. We must firmly decide against vengeance, otherwise there will be no peace."

The atmosphere was calm. Cattle were slaughtered in the traditional manner at remembrance ceremonies and there were cries of "God is Great."

"Today it is festive because we have peace," said Malika, a 40-year-old woman. "Of course people have lost relatives. My son was killed fighting and my husband was killed by bombs. But I console myself in seeing what they died for," she said.

Portraits of Dzhokhar Dudayev, the Chechen president who declared his tiny republic independent in 1991 and was reportedly killed in a Russian air raid earlier this year, dotted the crowd.

Mr. Dudayev effectively took power in Chechnya on Sept. 6, 1991, ousting the Communist authorities. On Oct. 27, 1991, he was elected president, in a poll whose validity was disputed by the Russian authorities, and he declared unilateral independence several days later.

The Russian army attacked in December 1994 and Dudayev, a former Soviet Air Force general, became a legendary figure for his resistance and huge numbers of ordinary people refuse to believe that he has died.

Most estimates say that 30,000 to 40,000 people have died in the 20-month war, most of them civilians. However, the Russian peace envoy Alexander Lebed said that 70,000 to 90,000 had been killed, with three times that number injured.

The accord, signed on Aug. 31, has been greeted with relief in Chechnya and Gen. Lebed has become a hero to a people exhausted by war.

In Moscow however, both the plan and Gen. Lebed are under attack.

Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin cast further doubt on the accord Friday, saying that Chechnya could not be allowed independence.

"We spent too long uniting Russia and did not unite so that later we would break it up into parts," Mr. Chernomyrdin was quoted as saying by ITAR-TASS on a visit to the Urals city of Orenburg.

On Thursday, the premier said a peace accord ending the war and putting off any final decision on Chechnya's political status until December 2001 was a "political document. It does not of itself bear any juridical obligation."

President Boris Yeltsin said Thursday that he supported Gen. Lebed's controversial peace mission, described by Communists and nationalists as a capitulation to the rebels, but said he opposed a quick withdrawal of Russian troops, the Chechens' biggest demand.

"I support his action, and I have backed the latest plan of action with the exception of one issue — the fast and prompt withdrawal of troops — I think we should not be in a hurry to do that. The rest I have backed and fully approved," Mr. Yeltsin said in a television interview.

It was the first direct comment Mr. Yeltsin had made on the plan, signed at the weekend by Gen. Lebed and Chechen rebel Chief-of-Staff Aslan Maskhadov.

It provides for the withdrawal of most of the troops sent to Chechnya by Mr. Yeltsin in December 1994 and for the establishment of Russian-rebel patrols to take the place of the troops and their separatist opponents in the capital Grozny.

Mr. Yeltsin did not make clear how long he wanted his forces to stay in the north Caucasus region, but the rebels are likely to react angrily to his announcement.

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Questioned in Hong Kong by the Swedish News Agency (TT), Mr. Dahlberg said he had received "brief" information from the office for Special Information Gathering (KSI), the most secret section of the Military Secret Service.

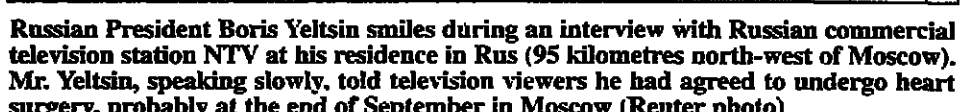
The arrested Swede, 32-year old Peter Nordstrom, whose picture has been published in Swedish newspapers, reiterated his version of the story to the press Friday, claiming he had been set up.

He admitted giving money to a Russian on Feb. 23 in a Saint Petersburg Museum, but insisted it was from friends who had asked him to help a sick relative.

The Russian daily Nezavisimaya Gazeta revealed Wednesday that Mr. Nordstroem was arrested as he was handed photographs of military documents classified "secret" and "top secret."

According to the paper, the Russian who handed him the film hidden in a wooden Russian doll was also arrested.

The Russian Secret Service, the FSB (formerly the KGB), has confirmed the information.



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He gave no details in an interview broadcast by all the main television networks Thursday about the nature of the operation, leaving the world guessing about the chances that he would be able to serve out his four-year second term.

His broadcast prompted immediate speculation about a succession battle. Some political analysts predicted that his chief of staff, Anatoly Chubais, would govern in his absence.

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Mr. Yeltsin's main rival in the presidential election, Communist leader Gennady Zyuganov, called for a meeting between parliamentary faction leaders.

Such a meeting could help avoid destabilisation of the situation, Interfax News Agency quoted him as saying.

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The liberal newspaper *Sovodnya* called Mr. Yeltsin's frank but delayed disclosure "a fact unprecedented in our political history."

But *Nevzavisimaya Gazeta* also reflected on the equivocation of recent months: "This state secret hasn't been a secret for almost anyone for a long time," wrote the daily.

Mr. Yeltsin said he would probably have the operation in late September in the Moscow Cardiological centre. "I do not want to go anywhere abroad," he said. "Our cardiological centre in Moscow is capable of performing such heart operations."

Mr. Yeltsin, who dropped almost completely from public view after defeating Mr. Zyuganov on July 3 to win a second term as president, looked tanned but tired in the broadcast.

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of the operation and investors sold European currencies for dollars on fears that any political upset in Moscow would spill westward.

Mr. Yeltsin, 65, said: "I have undergone routine checks and during these checks they have found something wrong with my heart. Recommendations of doctors, our doctors, were for an operation or to work in a passive way."

He spoke slowly, but with some of the sparkle he displayed in his reelection campaign, in the broadcast which followed two months of defensive statements by aides that he was absent from public view merely "on vacation."

Russian surgeon Mikhail Alishbayeva told Ekho Moskvy radio restoring the heart's blood supply was a complicated procedure which had an average death rate of three to four per cent.

Mr. Yeltsin's broadcast came a step closer to dismantling the taboos surrounding the condition of Kremlin leaders. In Soviet days, nothing was revealed about the state

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Story half told

PRESIDENT WILLIAM Jefferson Clinton was wandering on the outermost precincts of veracity when, trying to defend his "feel good" attack on Iraq, when he said on Wednesday that President Saddam Hussein was "taught a lesson" for violating U.N. resolutions. Unfortunately, there are no such resolutions. The U.S., in this context, has been referring to Security Council Resolution 688 to justify its attacks, secure in the calculation that not one person in ten thousand would check to see what 688 actually says in paragraphs one and two in the operative section:

"1. Condemns the repression of the Iraqi civil population in many parts of Iraq, including most recently in Kurdish populated areas, the consequences of which threaten international peace and security in the region;

"2. Demands that Iraq, as a contribution to removing the threat to international peace and security in the region, immediately end this repression and expresses the hope in the same context that an open dialogue will take place to ensure that the human and political rights of all Iraqi citizens are respected...."

By what stretch of the imagination can the words "end this repression" be taken as mandating the use of scores of "cruise" missiles to hit targets in southern Iraq? They do not because they cannot. And the U.S. has become very touchy on this issue because France is reminding the Security Council and the world that Washington has no basis in law for its actions and certainly no U.N. resolution to support it.

Resolution 688 was passed on April 5, 1991, and was adopted by ten votes to three (those against being Cuba, Yemen and Zimbabwe) with two abstentions (China and India). At the present time the Security Council cannot even meet because of unbridgeable gaps dividing the permanent members with the U.S. and U.K. facing Russia, China and France. What does this tell us about what happened in this part of the world last week? A lot, it seems, even though we are yet to hear the rest of the story.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER FOR Al Ra'i daily discussed the motives behind Washington's aggression on Iraq and the objectives of the United States in the Middle East. Sultan Al Hattab said that by launching a strike against Iraq Bill Clinton wants to outbid the Republicans who, through their current presidential campaign, have expressed their desire to deal more severely with the Iraqi regime once they have won the election in November. By launching the missile attack on Iraq, the U.S. is trying to intimidate Syria and to force it to accept the U.S.-Israeli dictates, to pave the ground for a strike against Iran, to send a message to Turkey that it cannot make any rapprochement with either Iraq or Iran and to please Israel and the Zionist lobby in the United States as well as to consolidate America's hold on the Gulf states. The writer said the strike is essentially aimed at weakening Iraq and maintaining its isolation from the rest of the Arab World.

A WRITER FOR Al Dostour demanded an emergency Arab summit meeting where the heads of Arab states would take a joint stand against America's aggression on Iraq. When Netanyahu came to power in Israel, he said, the Arabs convened a summit meeting to discuss what could be done in the face of Israel's headline stands; and in the light of the American aggression, the Arabs must hold a summit meeting, start a dialogue with the Iraqi leadership and concert efforts to deal with the danger that threatens all Arab states. If the Arabs turned against Iraq because of its invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and sided by the U.S.-led coalition to attack the Iraqi people, they have no excuse now if they fail to rally behind Iraq and protect its people from American aggression, said Bilal Tell. What we want to see, he said, is a quick pan-Arab response to a call on the Arab Nation by His Majesty King Hussein who has repeatedly maintained that no foreign power should be allowed to interfere in Iraq's internal affairs.

Jordanian Perspective

The U.S. sets the rules of the game

By Dr. Musa Keilani

THE AMERICAN missile strikes against Iraq last week as punishment for Saddam Hussein's military movements in the north of his country were an open slap not only for the Arabs but also all others who do not kowtow to U.S. dictates around the world. The American action had no legal basis, whether in the context of any United Nations Security Council resolutions or international legitimacy. Washington was indeed trying to impress the world that it remains the sole unchallenged superpower and anyone who dares question the self-assumed U.S. status stood to suffer the fate of Iraq and its people.

On the one hand, American officials insist that the "autonomous" Kurdish territories are indeed an integral part of Iraq, but, on the other, they are "punishing" the central government in Baghdad for exercising its sovereign right to handle the internal affairs of the country in whatever manner it finds fit.

It will be interesting to see any foreign power even criticising U.S. government actions against dissidents within the U.S., incidents similar to the assault almost three years ago on the Waco base of a group which challenged American laws and way of life. For us in the Middle East, there is little difference between the assault on Waco by American security forces and the moves by Baghdad in northern Iraq. Both are strictly internal affairs of the countries and governments concerned and no external power should have any say in those issues. As such, the U.S. violated international laws, challenged the norms of international behaviour and sought to bully its allies to see things the American way with limited success.

But it is highly unlikely that Washington told its allies that Saddam Hussein was partly serving the American objectives in the region by throwing his weight behind one Kurdish faction against another in northern Iraq. As the developments in northern Iraq clearly showed, the power of the pro-Iranian Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) was literally halved when it got kicked out of Erbil by the combined forces of the Kurdish Democratic Party and the Iraqi military.

It was no secret that the U.S. was alarmed over the growing strength of the PUK in northern Iraq if only because of the heavy Iranian influence on PUK leader Jalal Talabani. As such, Saddam Hussein's alliance with KDP leader Masoud Barzani fitted in well with the American objective of diluting the Iranian influence in the north of Iraq. That accounts for the three days of silence that Washington maintained when the combined forces of the Saddam-Barzani alliance hammered PUK forces and chased them out of Erbil.

When it was made abundantly clear that the PUK was beaten away from Erbil, the U.S. sprang into action with self-assumed indignation and "punished" Baghdad for its "incursions" into northern Iraq.

When U.S. President Bill Clinton made the pronouncement on Wednesday that the American mission in Iraq was accomplished, he had in mind, no doubt, the achievement of the objectives in northern Iraq.

Now one could expect more of American punishment for Iraq, particularly amid reports that KDP forces, with new armour and weapons supplied by the Iraqi army, are poised to attack Suleimaniyah, where PUK forces have regrouped. It is a safe bet that further American strikes would be forthcoming on Iraq as it becomes clear that the KDP would capture Suleimaniyah. The reason is very apparent: While Washington was happy to see the PUK cut down to size, it will be very upsetting for the U.S. to see pro-Baghdad elements emerging stronger than their pro-Iranian counterparts in northern Iraq. That is indeed part of the so-called dual-containment policy that Washington has been applying in the region after the Gulf war over Kuwait in 1991. The U.S. definitely likes a status quo where neither Iran nor Iraq emerges more powerful than in whatever conditions they are at present and it will seek to ensure that the game is played out under American rules.

The pity for all of us here in the region is that we are aware of the hidden motivations of the U.S. but unable to do anything about it simply because of the imbalance in the geopolitical power among ourselves. Until such time, the Arabs could get their act together, we will have to content with the role of being helpless bystanders.

'U.S. fails to rally support for its unjustifiable attack against Iraq'

THE LOCAL press tackled the U.S. aggression on Iraq and its repercussions as well as the Netanyahu-Arafat meeting and the Middle East question in addition to a host of domestic issues.

The American attack on Iraq is unjustified by any standard since the Iraqi forces did not enter a foreign country but carried out a limited operation within Iraq's territory, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily. That is why the United States has failed to rally the support of its own allies for its missile attack and that is why the world community, especially Arab states that joined the U.S.-led military coalition against Iraq in the 1991 war have generally expressed dismay over the American behaviour, said the paper. The Arab and Islamic countries surrounding Iraq have repeatedly declared their keenness on safeguarding Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity and they have been expected to denounce the American action which, said the paper, is aimed at the Arab Nation at large.

Mahmoud Rimawi said that the U.S. is adopting a double-standard policy which is behind its current behaviour vis-a-vis the Arab World. While attacking Iraq for its movement of troops inside Iraqi territories, the U.S. is condoning Israel's continued aggression on the Arab countries and its occupation of Syrian, Lebanese and Palestinian lands for the past three decades, said the columnist for Al Ra'i. The writer said instead of using its power to bring about peace to the world, the U.S. is following a policy of encouraging aggression and committing acts of aggression against the Arab Nation.

A writer for Al Dostour launched a scathing attack on the United States for its aggression on Iraq saying that Washington is not only encouraging Israel's aggression on the Arab Nation but it is committing aggression itself against the Arab people in total disregard to international laws and principles. While the U.S. is imposing an embargo on one third of the Arab countries it is giving its Israeli ally a free hand to commit atrocities in Palestine and Lebanon and helping the Jewish state to consolidate its hold on the occupied Arab lands, said Taher Al Adwan. The writer said that the U.S. has no glory being super power launching an aggression on a small Third World nation and its aggression exposes its real face to the world. He said that the U.S. which has transformed the Arab World into a vast military base for its adventures is backed in its neo-colonialist policies by Britain, the old imperialist country which has no regard to the Third World or the rights of its people.



Reviewed by Elia Nazzari

A writer for Al Ra'i daily accused President Bill Clinton of trying to improve his image in the current U.S. presidential campaign by launching aggression on Iraq. Tawfiq Abul Rub said that encouraged by his nomination to the presidency by his Democratic Party Bill Clinton chose to launch yet one more act of aggression in order to show off the U.S. military power on the one hand and to secure as many votes as possible for his re-election in November on the other. The writer compared Mr. Clinton's aggression on Iraq before the presidential election in the U.S. with Shimon Peres's aggression on Qana where more than 100 civilians were killed and said that such brutal action against the Lebanese people did not help Peres to win the elections adding that the attack on Iraq could well cost Clinton the renewal of his mandate in the White House.

"Why did not the United States interfere when Turkey launched an attack on the Kurds in northern Iraq but did attack Iraq with missiles for its intervention to stop the conflict among the Kurds on Iraq's own territory?" asked Raef Nijem, a writer for Al Dostour. The real reason behind Mr. Clinton's aggression on Iraq is to cover up for his failure to carry out reforms on the domestic front as was promised to the Americans upon his election four years ago said the writer. At the same time through this new aggression, Mr. Clinton wanted to show the Republican Party and its presidential nominee Bob Dole that the Democrats are capable of handling external affairs and ensuring America's world supremacy and so win the votes of the American people in the coming election, continued the writer. The U.S. which chose the course of destruction and crushing the poor nations of the world and pillaging their wealth can not last long because, said the writer, these policies are against morals, mankind, freedoms and against all rules and principles.

Sultan Al Hattab, a writer for Al Ra'i, described the Netanyahu-Arafat meeting Thursday as one step in the right direction. The meeting followed Israel's realisation that the Palestinians still hold winning cards and that driving despair into the hearts of the Palestinian people and their leadership would not yield any fruitful results for the Likud-led government, said the writer. The Palestinians have proved that they are united in their struggle and in seeking their national objectives and they adopted a firm stand in the face of the Netanyahu government, forcing it to come to the negotiating table to resume the peace process, added the writer. Israel, stressed the writer, has no alternative but to carry out the Oslo agreements on the redeployment of its troops in Hebron, open negotiations on the final settlement with the Palestinian leaders and comply with the requirements of a lasting peace.

Mohammad Subeichi, a writer for Al Dostour, said that the latest crisis over subsidies resulted in the emergence of two political entities in Jordan: One that is absolutely backing the government's actions and another that is totally condemning its policies and describing such policies as sabotaging democracy and endangering the national interests. According to the writer, the first group constitutes a real danger because it aims to secure and protect its own selfish interests through hypocrisy while the other represents people who see nothing good coming from the government and therefore it constitutes a danger to democracy since it targets persons who assume government posts and demands the downfall of the government. In the middle, said the writer, there is a small but ineffective group which tries to offer advice and advocate dialogue with the government. But, he said, one thing is clear and that is the downfall of the government can by no means end the deficit in the budget taking into consideration that the present government did not introduce the economic reform programme which followed the 1989 riots.

Tackling the problems of poverty and unemployment in Jordan, Fahd Al Fanek, a writer for Al Ra'i, said that these problems face most of the developing nations and create many headaches to their governments and the decision makers and planners. But he said the majority of researchers and economists believe that handling these two issues requires the introduction of an integrated package of measures which could be painful at first but very effective in the end. It has been proved that poverty is a direct result of the excessive population growth, lack of family planning rules, poor investments, decline in foreign aid, recession, poor public administration and the non-involvement of women in socio-economic activities, according to the writer. It is futile for the government to try to handle one aspect at a time, said the writer, who stressed that only a package of integrated measures can achieve successful results.

While the safe area and no-fly zone created in 1991 remain in place to protect Kurds from the sword of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and his rage at their post-Gulf war rebellion, those twin shields no longer serve a coherent policy.

Washington appears to lack the will to whip the fractious Iraqi opposition, including the

By Channa Lachs

NO, WE DON'T see pictures on the news of hungry children. We don't hear radio reports from the cities, villages and camps. We don't hear that Abie Nathan has opened a bank account and is collecting money. But the fact that we don't hear about it doesn't mean there is nothing to tell. Sadly, maybe we need Arafat's threatening posturing to make us sit up and look.

Tens of thousands of families in the West Bank and Gaza have been surviving for the last six months on no income whatsoever. No wages, no unemployment benefit, no child or other welfare benefit.

Undoubtedly our fury and fear following February's bomb attacks have made it difficult for us to feel concern about the Palestinians when our own welfare has seemed in jeopardy.

Nevertheless, I believe we must be open to what is happening to our neighbours. They are an integral part of the local reality and we cannot afford to blunt our senses to their suffering.

The closure of the territories was almost total for about five months, but in the last month and a half it has been eased; about 20,000 people (less than 30 per cent of pre-February levels) have found work in Israel. Most of the 50,000 or so others who previously worked in Israel remain unemployed. Dr. Rasan Andoni of Bir Zeit University estimates the unemployment level in the Bethlehem area at around 60 per cent. In Tulkarem some of the unemployed have received temporary work cleaning the streets, earning NIS 20-30 a day. But for most, there is no substitute work. In Nablus, although most people are mer-

chants and work locally, their incomes have been severely compromised because of the difficulty of acquiring an entrance permit to purchase goods inside Israel.

However, the situation in the towns is excellent compared with the villages and crowded refugee camps. There people were predominantly employed as labourers inside the Green Line; the impact of the closure on them is therefore enormous. Najah Manasra, a psychiatric nurse, told me about families selling their jewelry and TV sets to buy food.

Food has become the predominant item on which money is spent. The recent increase in the price of flour was a blow to many families. According to Manasra, rather than venturing out and bearing their children's pleas for ice-cream, families isolate themselves in their homes.

But for most families it isn't only schoolbooks, shoes and ice-cream that have become luxury items. In many households telephones have been cut off because families can't afford to pay the bill. In Tulkarem, following warning adverts on local TV, electricity was cut off in some homes; in Bethlehem Mekorot threatened to cut off the water.

A community also has medical needs. According to Hanan Hamed from Tulkarem, women have stopped going to the local maternity clinic to give birth, preferring the cheaper, if more dangerous, option of giving birth at home. People are no longer consulting doctors but saving money by going directly to the pharmacist.

All these hardships have increased tension within families. Manasra describes a chronic

state of depression that many people are submerged in, with increased violence in families and on the streets.

What thunders loud and clear amid all this distress is our cringing silence. How can we sleep soundly at night when our neighbours are leading such lives? It isn't happening on the other side of the world. These deprivations are occurring just a few kilometres away.

While the physical distance may be small, over the Green Line feels more like behind an iron wall. It is the media's duty to inform us about the life of our nearest neighbours. The news bulletins which follow every cough and hiccup in internal political developments and foreign diplomacy cannot continue to ignore the heavy human malaise affecting hundreds of thousands of men, women and children.

One of the clearer messages of the election results was an endorsement of Jewish content in our society. But where are our Jewish values, the halachic obligation to help the needy, give charity, and save lives? Do we really believe in a selective and limited application of these ideals? I have heard of just one (Orthodox) synagogue that took the initiative to collect money to buy food for impoverished Palestinian families.

The political questions, so entwined with human issues, on both sides, are enormously complex. But the answer isn't to bury our heads in the sand. Whatever our political views, we can justify indifference to issues of common humanity and decency? Do we really want to wait until, God forbid, Palestinian children begin to die of starvation?

The Jerusalem Post

West seen as losing hold on Iraqi Kurdistan

By Kurt Schork

Reuter

ZAKHO, Iraq — When Kurdish chieftain Masoud Barzani invited Baghdad to help wrest control of Erbil from troops loyal to rival Jalal Talabani, he sealed the beginning of the end of the Western hold on Iraqi Kurdistan.

"This must be a turning point of some sort," a British aid worker with long experience in Iraq said in the northern capital of Erbil on Thursday.

"There is a sense things cannot return to what they were before the battle for Erbil. There will be more fighting between Barzani and Talabani, but Kurdistan is also slipping back into the regional fold, out of the arms of the West," he said.

While the safe area and no-fly zone created in 1991 remain in place to protect Kurds from the sword of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and his rage at their post-Gulf war rebellion, those twin shields no longer serve a coherent policy.

Washington appears to lack the will to whip the fractious Iraqi opposition, including the

Kurds, into more formidable shape and give them the backing to make a serious attempt at toppling Saddam.

That scenario appears all the more unlikely in the absence of a consensus on who or what will come after President Saddam. The prospect of a widespread civil war in oil-rich Iraq terrifies the world. Reluctantly, even Washington seems to prefer the devil it knows. For their part, the Kurds have tired of playing the bulwark against Baghdad, a role in which they were cast by the West.

Having dutifully languished in limbo for five years, waiting for the West to unseat President Saddam, Mr. Barzani and Mr. Talabani and their followers are making new alliances of convenience to bolster their own positions inside Kurdistan.

Mr. Barzani, who lost many members of his own clan to President Saddam in decades of rebellion, looked south to Baghdad nevertheless and captured Erbil, Iraq's Kurdistan's largest city, in the bargain.

Mr. Talabani has turned east to Iran, Iraq's big regional rival for military and political

support. To the north, Turkey has its troops poised along the border to root out Turkish Kurds who use the rugged mountains inside Iraq as a sanctuary for their own long-running insurgency.

Thus the power vacuum created by Western policy in Iraqi Kurdistan is being filled by Baghdad, Tehran and Ankara. The notion that Iraq's territorial integrity could be preserved indefinitely while Baghdad was denied influence in the north has come up empty. The question is, what comes next?

Iraqi Kurdistan could be carved into spheres of influence by regional powers, leaving Mr. Barzani and Mr. Talabani to seek succour where they can find it.

This is the option for a Kurdish civil war, Turkey, Iran and Syria, regional rivals with their respective Kurdish minorities, play Kurd against Kurd. Frequently they pay for the privilege by supplying one Kurdish faction with arms and money. Baghdad plays the same game, skillfully.

Alternatively the United States could decide to support efforts to oust the Iraqi leader.

Includes frescoes and only known Nabataean mosaic floors: Fine Nabataean villa partially excavated in Wadi Mousa

By Rami G. Khouri
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Construction work earlier this year on a new hotel in Wadi Mousa, near Petra, accidentally uncovered the remains of an ancient water cistern with a stone roof and steps.

When Dr. Khairieh 'Amr of the Department of Antiquities went to investigate, she noticed wall lines and remains of what appeared to be a bathhouse in an adjacent area where a new road was being built. Nearly four months of excavations later, she and a team of colleagues from the Department of Antiquities had documented the rare remains of an ancient private Nabataean villa from the 1st Century AD, just before the Roman occupation of the Nabataean Kingdom and its capital at Petra.

The excavation of the cistern and adjacent areas uncovered artifacts from the 1st Century BC/AD to the Ottoman period, with the only gap in occupation being the early Islamic

(Umayyad-Abbasid) period. The excavation here reached a depth of 5.4 metres without hitting bedrock, but had to be stopped for safety reasons. The continuous use of the cistern and adjacent areas over such a long period of time suggests the vast information on ancient cultures that may still be sealed in the ground in and around Wadi Mousa town.

The salvage excavation was important for what it revealed about opulent Nabataean private residences, and also for some intriguing but vague clues about the possible nearby location of a Nabataean or early Roman temple. The dig allowed documentation of this rare site before the owner of the land destroyed the site in order to build shops and storage rooms.

The excavated remains of the villa, along a 40-metre-long stretch of land surrounded by houses in the middle of Wadi Mousa, are only part of the original structure or complex, most of which is buried beneath

adjacent streets and modern buildings. The excavated structures comprised the south side of the original complex, which included a large, beautifully decorated villa with a bath complex. It was built in the 1st Century AD and had several phases of use, before being abandoned and then destroyed in the late 1st or early 2nd Century AD.

The area of the ruined complex was used as a dumping ground for municipal debris from some other built structure in the late Roman/early Byzantine era (around the 3rd/4th Century AD). The nature of the architectural fragments and small finds in this debris suggests to Dr. 'Amr that the building remains dumped here may have been from a nearby temple located uphill from the site. This hypothesis is suggested by the many column drums and capital fragments, many unguentaria (small ceramic bottles), and many fragments of ceramic lamps that were deliberately broken, as if they had been used as

offerings.

A large, opulent villa

The excavated remains of the Nabataean villa included an entrance hall along its south side, decorated with hexagonal paving stones and coloured wall frescoes with architectural motifs (similar to the frescoes at Wadi Siyagh in Petra, and at Alexandria and Pompeii).

West of the entrance hall was an Oriental-style floor latrine, near which were found some finely carved collapsed stones with typical Nabataean motifs of rosettes with pine cones.

One stone has the remains of a male bust, most probably a representation of the sun god Helios-Apollo.

Adjacent to this area was a room with a well-preserved mosaic floor dated from the end of the 1st Century AD, making it the only known mosaic from a Nabataean building (the earliest known mosaic in all Jordan is from the Herodian fortress-palace at Mekawir, and dates from

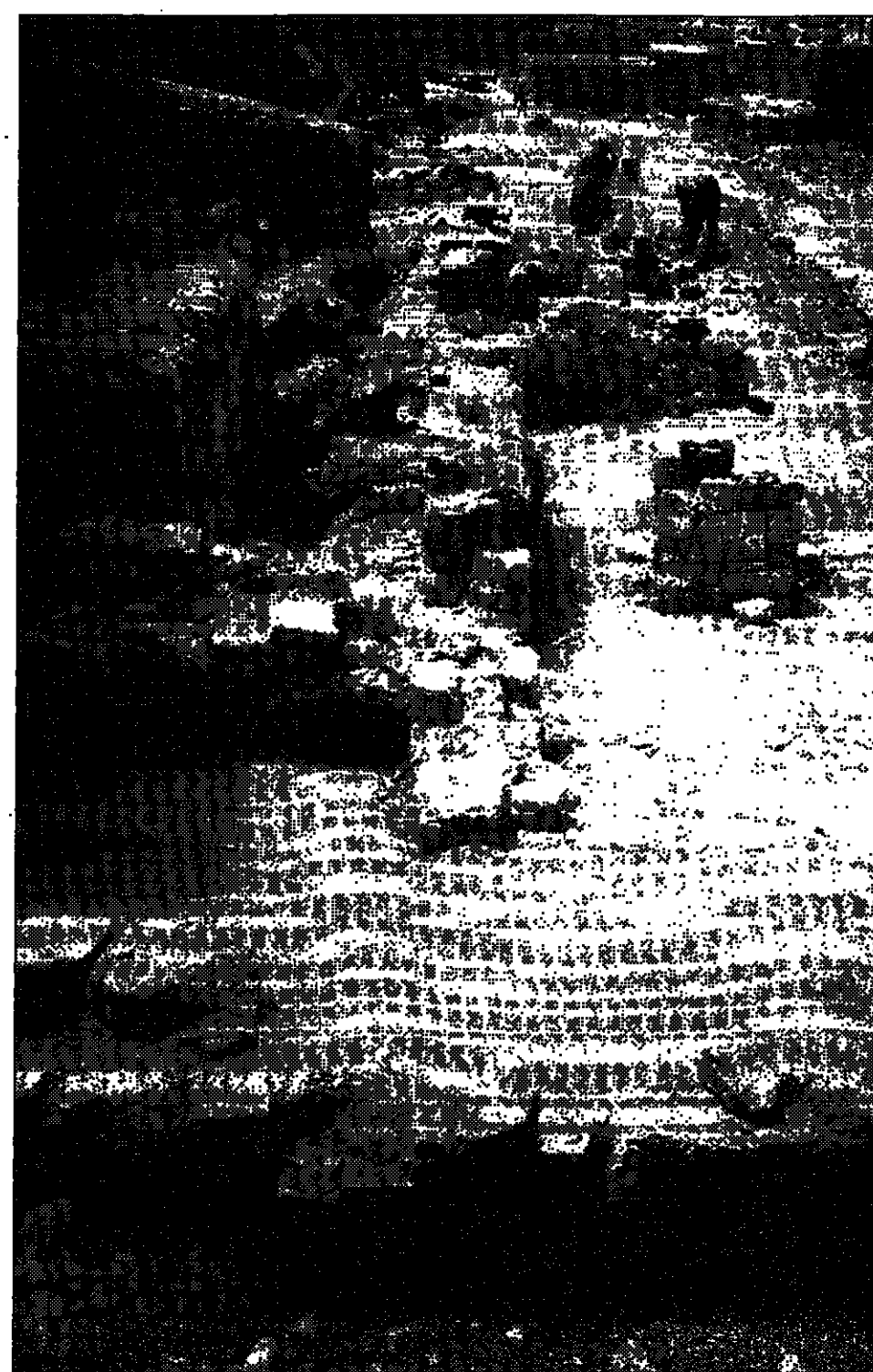
the 1st Century BC). The mosaic decoration is purely geometric, and resembles mosaics known from Oes-tia, the port of Rome. A mosaic section about two by three metres in size was excavated and conserved, and is now on display at the Petra museum.

Corridors led to a room of the baths complex with a nicely paved floor of green, yellow and red stone. This may have been the apody-tarium, or the changing room. It led into the caldarium, or the hot steam room, which had remains of its raised stone floor resting on square pillars, and a system of ceramic pipe flues and drains to bring in the steam and take out the excess water. The split-level drainage system in the baths included different sized ceramic pipes that brought water from different rooms and fed into a main drain that exited under the baths and the house. An important find in the baths was the remains of a lion's head water fountain, the lion being a common architectural feature throughout Petra.

Adjacent to the bath was the kitchen area of the house, with a fine stone floor, a tabun cooking oven, and many broken cooking pots and plates. The kitchen's location next to the baths may indicate that both facilities shared a single furnace, of which no trace remains.

North of the kitchen a hallway led to a large room with more frescoed walls, mostly Pompeian-style architectural designs in yellow, blue and green on a deep crimson/red background.

Fresco remains were found on the east side of the house, on the walls of two other rooms that rest mostly underneath modern buildings, and thus could not be excavated. These have green flourishes that look like large blades of grass in a freestyle pattern, bunches of grapes, olive branches, and other agrarian depictions on a golden yellow background. All the frescoes have been removed to



Partial view of the Nabataean house during excavation (photo by Rami G. Khouri).



General view of the mosaic floor in a room south of the bath area (photo by Khairieh 'Amr/Department of Antiquities)

Christopher holds talks in Germany

(Continued from page 1)

Mr. Christopher had more than three hours of talks with French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette Thursday in an attempt to overcome French reticence about the latest U.S. military initiative against Iraq. Mr. Christopher also had a brief meeting with President Jacques Chirac, but made no comment afterwards.

France has expressed strong reservations about U.S. missile attacks on Iraqi air defence targets and the extension of the southern no-fly zone. The zone was extended unilaterally by the United States up to the 33rd Parallel, close to the suburbs of Baghdad, after the United States launched a cruise

missile attack on Iraqi military targets Tuesday.

A French foreign ministry spokesman said after the talks that France would not take part in air force patrols over an enlarged area of the southern zone.

The spokesman said France would continue to take part in joint patrols over the two original "no-fly" zones in southern and northern Iraq as from Monday.

A Pentagon official said earlier Thursday that France had suspended Wednesday its participation in allied patrols in northern and southern Iraq, but France refused Thursday night to confirm this.

"The French suspended participation in OPC and JTF-SWA pending senior

level review," said the official who asked not to be named.

OPC stands for Operation Provide Comfort under which U.S., French and British aircraft have enforced a no-fly zone north of the 36th Parallel since shortly after the 1991 Gulf war. JTF-SWA is the Joint Task Force-South West Asia which involves allied aircraft patrolling the "no-fly" zone in southern Iraq.

A French military source said after Mr. Christopher's visit that "the talks with the United States are over and we are resuming our missions in the normal way."

Earlier in London, Mr. Christopher hailed Britain's "unstinting support" for the U.S. air strikes on Iraqi

military targets.

He said the extended no-fly zone over southern Iraq was being "fully implemented."

On Thursday night, British Prime Minister John Major delivered an implied rebuke to France criticising those countries which have "chosen to stay in the burrows."

"I believe the U.S. were brave to do what they did. I think we were right to support the U.S. and I regret that other people have chosen to stay in the burrows on this occasion. I am not going to specify any particular nation, but I think the U.S. deserves support. I think there is tacit support. I wish more people would declare it publicly."

Baghdad declares victory as Kurdish allies gain ground

(Continued from page 1)

for the security of U.N. humanitarian programmes in the region, said: "So far all U.N. organisations and NGOs are safe."

Fear was rising among residents in Sulaimaniyah as accounts spread of the Iraqi seizure of Erbil last weekend and the "cleanup" operation conducted by Iraqi agents who stayed behind after government troops pulled out.

"Iraqi intelligence services now have a free hand in Kurdistan in areas controlled by the KDP," Mr. Talabani said.

The PUK leader said that the KDP's alliance with President Saddam effectively ends the five-year effort to create a Kurdish state in northern Iraq, but added that all other Kurdish factions were united against the Iraqi president.

The power-sharing agreement between the PUK and KDP broke down in May 1994, however, and the ensuing conflict has left more than 2,200 people dead.

Senior United States officials were warned by Kurdish leaders that they could turn to Iraq for aid if Washington did not support them against rivals backed by Iran, Britain's Independent newspaper reported on Friday. It said letters sent by the KDP to U.S. policymakers in the week before Iraqi forces backed the KDP in its capture of Erbil contained warnings the group could go to Baghdad for support.

The newspaper said the correspondence, of which it printed extracts, could stir up controversy over reports Washington was taken by surprise by the intervention of the Iraqi army in the conflict.

But the Independent said the KDP of Massoud Barzani warned the United States before its missile attacks that Iran was already supporting the PUK, and that his faction would turn to Baghdad for support if Washington did nothing.

The paper said the KDP sent a memo to U.S. officials before the attack on Erbil saying: "Our options are limited..."

"Since the U.S. is not responding even politically... the only option left is the Iraqis."

The newspaper said that U.S. officials appeared to remain relaxed as the situation deteriorated in northern Iraq over several months despite a series of communications between the KDP and the U.S. administration.

U.S. officials who

received the correspondence included Robert Deutsch, director of the office of northern Gulf affairs, and Robert Pelletreau, assistant secretary of state for Near East affairs, the paper said.

In the end, despite last-minute talks at the U.S. embassy in London on August 30, the KDP turned to President Saddam for help. A day after the talks, KDP fighters backed by Iraqi tanks moved into Erbil.

Mr. Perry said the United States reserved the right to strike at Iraq again if Baghdad tried to rebuild the air defences disabled by the U.S. missile raids.

In Washington, U.S. intelligence chief John Deutch told the Senate Intelligence Committee that Iraqi troops were now pulling out of northern Iraq, a view disputed by the PUK.

Most Israelis approve of Netanyahu-Arafat summit

(Continued from page 1)

The prime minister on Wednesday warned any minister who publicly disagreed with the meeting to resign.

Within his ranks, Mr. Netanyahu on Thursday threatened to fire cabinet ministers who cannot accept his decision to talk peace with Mr. Arafat.

But at a Likud Party convention in Tel Aviv — facing calls of "traitor" and "resign" — the premier vowed to maintain his hard-line positions in the peace talks.

"There is not, and will never be, a Palestinian state," Mr. Netanyahu told

the clearly divided audience, as some delegates applauded and others listened in stony silence. He also assured the audience that shaking Arafat's hand "wasn't easy."

Wednesday's long-delayed summit — the first time a right-wing Israeli premier has met the guerrilla-turned-peacekeeper — helped ease tensions with the Palestinians. It was hailed by Mr. Netanyahu's predecessor, peace architect Shimon Peres, and appeared to enjoy tacit support of a majority in the Likud and in the cabinet.

But a vocal minority of Likud stalwarts, especially Jewish settlers and religious

nationalist, consider Mr. Netanyahu's peace efforts a betrayal that endangers their dream of holding onto the West Bank and Gaza.

One group of settlers greeted Mr. Netanyahu at Thursday's Likud convention with flyers bemoaning "100 days of disappointment" since his May election victory over Mr. Peres. Protesters carrying anti-Netanyahu signs were not allowed into the Tel Aviv hall and loud music drowned out jeering as Mr. Netanyahu made his entry.

Inside the convention hall tempers flared, with several scuffles and much shouting erupting between supporters and opponents of the

peace moves.

"Bibi has betrayed us," said Amram Cohavi, a veteran Likud member, referring to Mr. Netanyahu by his nickname. He was shouted down by another man, who said he was wounded in the 1973 war. "I have five children... I want them to enjoy peace and that's why Bibi had to meet Mr. Arafat," said the man.

In an interview with Israel TV, Mr. Netanyahu said he would fire cabinet ministers who opposed him. "Ministers who do not sit comfortably with (the Arafat meeting) will not be in the government," Mr. Netanyahu said.

Saudis 'advised' U.S. to end Iraq strikes

(Continued from page 1)

put other members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) — Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain and Oman — in a tight spot.

Despite their hostility to Saddam Hussein, these countries kept silent about the U.S. operation. Their foreign ministers are to meet in Riyadh on Saturday to discuss the situation in Iraq.

Only Kuwait, which is still reeling from the 1990

Iraqi invasion, published a statement expressing "its understanding about (Washington's) firm stand."

The Gulf press, which usually toes the official line, did not pull any punches. On Friday, the Saudi newspaper Al Madina published a caricature showing U.S. President Bill Clinton addressing U.S. soldiers. "Hit hard. We are waging a really big battle... against Bob Dole," Mr. Clinton's challenger in the presidential elections, it read.

Such opinions reflect the

state of mind of GCC officials. "President Clinton is attacking Iraq for electoral reasons with which we have nothing to do," a Gulf official said on condition he not be identified.

The Saudi daily Asharq Al Awsat, published in London, said: "Even if the Arabs have differences with Saddam Hussein and his adventurist policies, they support him when he's faced with external aggression."

Al Hayat newspaper, which is owned by Saudi Khaled Ben Sultan, said

Iraq's offensive on its northern Kurdish city of Erbil last Saturday "was much more legitimate" than the U.S. retaliation which it provoked.

Prince Sultan was the commander of the Arab military contingent in the U.S.-led drive to free Kuwait from Iraqi occupation in 1991.

Newspapers in the United Arab Emirates and Qatar lashed out at the United States and defended Baghdad's right to intervene in Kurdish areas within its own territory.

Government plans to revamp public transport sector

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Public Transport Corporation (PTC), a state monopoly which owns the right for public transport in the Municipality of Greater Amman, will be downsized to the role of a regulatory body under proposals being studied by the government, according to Transport Minister Nasser Lawzi.

The proposals involve turning the PTC into a government department that would supervise public transport in the Greater Amman area, while the fleet of buses it now owns will be handed over to two private sector operators.

Simultaneously, all other private sector operators in public transport in the area will be encouraged to merge and come up with three or four large-sized entities along with lifting the PTC monopoly in Greater Amman, the minister told the Jordan Times in an interview.

At present, the PTC directly operates 120 buses within the Greater Amman routes and some of the suburbs of the capital. Another 50 PTC buses are being refurbished at a cost of JD 500,000 and would be put into operation soon in order to absorb the rising demand for public transport in the transitional period, said Mr.

Lawzi. "Most of the PTC buses are more than 15 years old," he noted.

The government opened up the public transport sector for private operators three years ago when it allowed small firms to run their own vehicles on most of the Greater Amman routes.

"Today, PTC accounts for only 45 per cent of the traffic," said Mr. Lawzi. "Thirteen private operators who have about 500 buses of 25-seat capacity account for the rest."

The Ministry of Transport has found that the performance of PTC, which has accumulated debts of JD

4.7 million, was not up to its expectations in terms of "frequency and safety as well as cost-effective operations," and thus the ministry was spurred into adopting quick measures to streamline the overall status of the public transport system in Amman and its suburbs, Mr. Lawzi said.

An integral part of the reorganization of the PTC, which is burdened with "over-bloated staff," he added, is a revamping of existing regulations on licensing of operators of public transport vehicles.

"The entire sector is being scrutinized with a view to setting things right once and for all," he said. "The

key objective is to completely open up public transport to the private sector and thus also bring about more efficient operations to benefit the public."

The minister said the government was no longer willing to invest state funds in the public transport sector. "In fact, shifting the entire operations to the private sector means not only higher efficiency but also the availability of private funds for expansion and modernization."

Hiring and firing staff is a prerogative given to the administration of the PTC from its inception, Mr. Lawzi noted. "Some of the present staff of PTC could

continue to work with the proposed regulatory body while others could join the private sector operators who will take over the operations of the PTC fleet," the minister said.

The ministry is now studying the status of the PTC staff, who are in principle considered government employees although they had not gone through the Civil Service Commission, he said.

"No one is going to lose his or her job as a result of the changes in the PTC," he affirmed. "We will find places for them and this could involve shifting people to other departments."

Arabs refuse to raise League's budget

CAIRO (AFP) — Permanent delegates to the Arab League have turned down a proposal to increase the League's 1997 budget by 13.8 per cent.

A spokesman for the Arab League said the permanent delegates, who recently attended meetings of the Standing Committee for Financial and Administrative Affairs, rejected the proposal to increase the League's budget to \$31.4 million up from \$27.6 million, citing the difficult economic situations of most Arab countries as a reason for their rejection.

The spokesman added that nine Arab countries made reservations and called for reducing their own contribution to the League, while five others were unable to pay their share, which constitutes 14.5 per cent of the League's budget.

The Arab League has a budget shortfall of more than \$114 million, including \$84.3 in the form of uncollected arrears. The source said that the total contributions to the budget this year did not exceed 60 per cent of League's budget.

HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 7, 1996

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Daytime today should be spent handling whatever career activities need your attention. Be happy with close friends later this evening and you can all have a fun time together engaged in those activities which you all enjoy.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 21) Make plans for recreation today for the days ahead and spend this time with your loved ones even if you all go away. Tonight do those activities which will please your mate and you can have a romantic time together.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Take time today to improve some home situation so that there won't be any difficulty in the days ahead. Handle those tasks later this evening which you have been neglecting so that you can be quite successful.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Handle public affairs nicely today so that you can receive recognition from those in authority. Don't permit an older fellow associate to monopolize your time or you will not complete any current projects you are given.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) This is a good day today to get your property in better order and show that you are practical in your creative ideas. Take it easy later this evening with your loved ones and you can relax from stress for the coming week.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Plan how to be more successful in your personal aims and you will gain recognition from a bigwig who likes your method of operation. Steer clear of amusements later this evening since some could be costly.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Plan a new course of action today which will help you to get ahead faster and develop more intelligently. Enjoy your friends later this evening and plan some fun activities which all of you will truly enjoy.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) This is an ideal day to talk over activities for the days ahead with your close friends and study advice given to you. Later this evening you can spend this time with your loved ones and have a relaxing, peaceful period together.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Get busy today at credit and public affairs which you can handle with great efficiency. You should avoid outside duties later this evening which could be detrimental to your career progress and make your life successful.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Study new interests during the daytime today and make good use of information you have gathered for a new project. This evening should be spent with close friends and have a good time together for a peaceful time together.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You can handle obligations very carefully today so be patient and thereby you deal with any situation which could be present. Later this evening you can proceed with a new project which can make you quite successful.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Find out from fellow associates today how you stand with them and come to a better understanding so that there won't be any difficulties. Later this evening will be good for you to consult with a knowledgeable person.

Birthstone of September: Sapphire — Lapis Lazuli.

Ministry close to privatising Aqaba Railways Corporation

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Ministry of Transport is in an advanced stage to privatise the Aqaba Railways Corporation (ARC) and expects the move to materialise as soon as the full Council of Ministers approves a set of related proposals, according to Transport Minister Nasser Lawzi.

The status of ARC, whose operations are limited to transporting phosphate and related products from mines and plants in the south to the Port of Aqaba, has always been a problem for the government, Mr. Lawzi said.

The company has an accumulated debt of about JD 50 million, incurred as a result of offering below-cost charges for transporting phosphates, and other products for the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company (JPMC) over many years. The government owns a

majority of shares of JPMC. "The government has been financing the export of phosphates by offering indirect subsidy of JD 1 and JD 1.5 per tonne of the material transported by mines to Aqaba," the minister told the Jordan Times. "The losses incurred by the ARC are a direct result of below-cost revenues."

"This situation cannot continue," said Mr. Lawzi. "What is the purpose of one government entity showing profits at the expense of another state entity?"

The government has been involved in discussions with the JPMC for many years on a possible acquisition of ARC by the phosphate mines company, the sole customer of the railway corporation.

"But the JPMC argued that if it were to acquire the company, then it would be inflicting harm on both the JPMC as well as the ARC," said the minister.

As such, a compromise

formula drawn up by the Ministry of Transport and submitted to the government involves "privatising the operations of the railway company."

The formula involves, according to Mr. Lawzi, assessing the net assets of the company and offering it for private operators, "with the only condition being that the JPMC is an essential equity holder and is very much part of the management of the company's operations."

"We have already received many letters of interest from foreign companies, who are willing to seriously consider acquiring an equity in the Aqaba Railway Corporation," said Mr. Lawzi.

Mr. Lawzi declined to reveal the details of the government proposal in terms of how the JD 50 million debts of the company would be absorbed.

"This is an issue that has to be decided upon by the full

Council of Ministers," he said.

The World Bank, which is guiding sweeping reforms in the Kingdom's transport sector, is being requested to submit its own recommendations to the JPMC, he added.

A French company conducted a thorough study of the status of the company and the means to streamline it more than 10 years ago. But no government took serious steps towards following up on the recommendations of the study.

Focus was brought upon the ARC as part of the attention given by the government of Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti, who took office in February this year.

Mr. Lawzi said the government was determined not to allow the ARC deteriorate further and add to its present debt burdens, and hence it was moving fast towards adopting the necessary measures to reorganise the company.

When the measures are implemented in full, the role of the government will be limited to licensing the operations of the company and collect royalty from the operators for the use of government land through which the railway runs and where stations are located.

Mr. Lawzi said the transformation of the company would inevitably involve the upgrading of the locomotives and wagons used by the ARC.

The engines and wagons of the ARC, he said, are serviceable but not in very good conditions, and, as such, need replacement or refurbishing. The cost of such work is estimated at around JD 15 million.

The main attraction for private sector operators in the proposed deal is the expected increase in quantity of phosphates to be transported, he said.

"Once the Shidiyah mine

comes fully operational by the year 2000, the JPMC expects to transport about eight million tonnes of rock phosphates through the railway company," noted Mr. Lawzi.

"Operations of such magnitude definitely hold out prospects for realising good profits, and this is an element most foreign operators are taking into consideration," he noted. "With the strict enforcement of the axial load limitations on truck, railway is going to be the main means for the transport of phosphates."

At the moment, Shidiyah is not directly connected to the ARC network. Phosphates from Shidiyah are transported by truck to a "terminal loading station" on the ARC network and sent to Aqaba by ARC wagons.

Uncertainty over Iraq may depress AFM this week

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The flare-up in Iraq and the American missile strike on Iraq restrained prices and trading at the Amman stock market last week, and the bourse could witness a depression this week as a result of the

uncertainty that now clouds the oil-for-food deal between Baghdad and the United Nations, brokers said Friday.

"The market was actually recovering from a three-month depression when the flare-up in Iraq struck a blow," said a broker. "The tension in the region, cou-

pled with the uncertainty over the oil-for-food deal, has done real harm to the market."

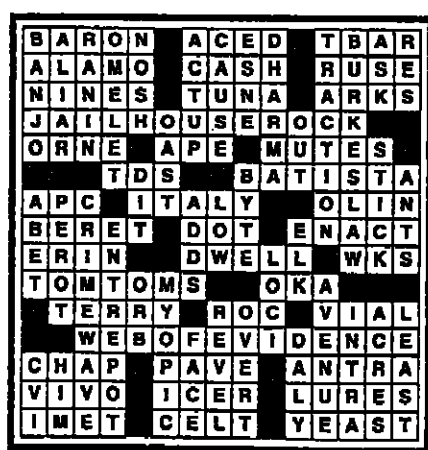
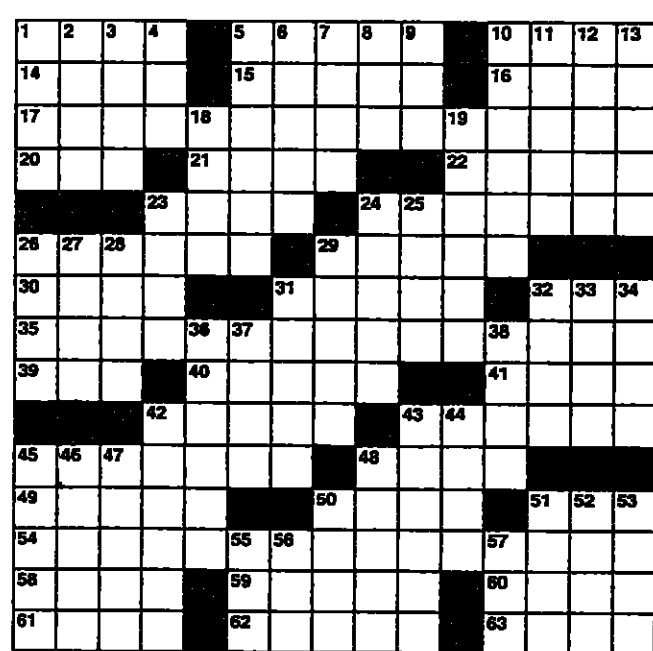
However, the broker said, the market withstood the impact of the developments last week if only because of positive developments in

(Continued on page 9)

THE Daily Crossword by James P. McWalters

ACROSS

- 1 Stringed instrument
- 5 Swiss city
- 10 North European
- 14 Russian city
- 15 Negatively charged particle
- 16 Not at home
- 17 1955 Disney classic
- 20 Self-esteem
- 21 Wild ox
- 22 Concur
- 23 Concoct
- 24 Vocations
- 26 More indelicate
- 29 Lifts to judge the weight of
- 30 Image
- 31 Still and — of comedy
- 32 Copy
- 35 Flynn and Gardner film of '57
- 39 Letter from England
- 40 Strained food
- 41 Shipshape
- 42 English forest
- 43 Property
- 45 Maxims
- 48 Christianity
- 49 Loos or Bryant
- 50 Self, pref.
- 51 Craze
- 54 One of the "Star Wars" trilogy
- 58 Mideast nation
- 59 Without — in the world
- 60 Greek liqueur
- 61 Thrill of yore
- 62 Wearing less
- 63 River in Germany



DOWN

- 1 Cavity
- 2 "To — and a bone" (Kipling)
- 3 Make over
- 4 Layer
- 5 Pennant
- 6 Supply
- 7 Actress
- 8 Japanese drama
- 9 Comp. pt.
- 10 Soave
- 11 Cognizant
- 12 Debussy opus
- 13 Categories
- 18 Swiss river
- 19 Violent one
- 23 Containers
- 24 Terminate
- 25 Hair style
- 26 Elegant display
- 27 Yearn
- 28 Campus belle
- 29 — of Troy
- 31 Equines
- 32 Puzzled
- 33 Irish fuel
- 34 Punta del —
- 36 Rumpus
- 37 Artist's model
- 38 Division word
- 42 Adjust
- 43 Williams or Rolle
- 44 — gin
- 45 A Curie
- 46 Dillies
- 47 Giant
- 48 Bizarre
- 50 At a distance
- 51 Vendetta
- 52 Tool with a curved blade
- 53 Name in fashion
- 55 Arrest
- 56 Edible tuber
- 57 — blow (average citizen)

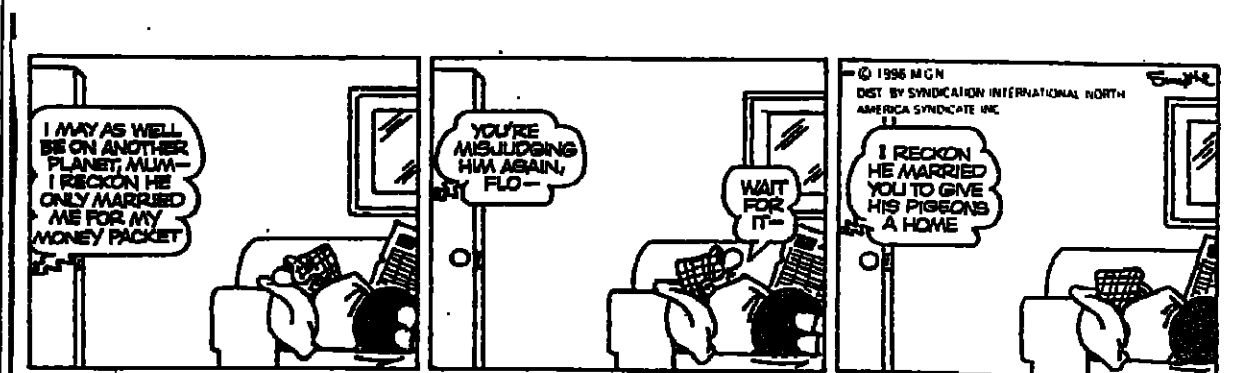
THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



Business

FOR RENT
Rooms apartment in Amman second floor.
Rooms in Al Rabaa Hotel floor 190 sq m.
Real Estate
Tel. 857198
Fax 810520

Happy Days
Passion
Cafe & Salads Cafe
DAILY FROM 11 A.M. - 1 A.M.
Tel. 857198
Fax 898537
Amman Uthman Hotel
San Rock Hotel

U.S. Open

Sampras clings to Grand Slam hopes as Edberg bids farewell

NEW YORK (AFP) — Pete Sampras, buoyed by the crowd and the memory of his late coach Tim Gullikson, salvaged a dramatic victory over Alex Corretja Thursday to reach the semifinals at the U.S. Open tennis championships.

Sampras fought through an upset stomach, apparently brought on by dehydration, to beat Corretja 7-6 (7/5), 5-7, 5-7, 6-4, 7-6 (9/7) in a match that started in the heat of afternoon and finished under the lights on stadium court.

Then Edberg, a six-time Grand Slam champion playing his last major tournament before retiring, gave the evening a suitably dramatic ending, as he saved four match points before bowing out to fourth-seeded Croatian Goran Ivanisevic.

"When I served at 5-4, he played an unbelievable game," Ivanisevic said, adding that the crowd's frenzied support for Edberg unnerved him a little.

"I didn't expect this crowd," he said. "I knew they were going to be for him, but not like this. Every time I missed a first serve they were happy and clapping."

Ivanisevic's first match

point came at 5-4 in the third. He failed to convert it and dropped his serve.

In the tiebreaker he needed four more to win 6-3, 6-4, 7-6 (11/9), wrapping it up when Edberg netted a low backhand volley.

Ivanisevic served 26 aces and was never really in trouble.

"He nearly served me off the court," Edberg said.

Sampras, on the other hand, was under pressure from Corretja from the very start, dropping his serve in the opening game.

Corretja held that edge until the 10th game, when he squandered two set points and dropped his serve as Sampras levelled the score at 5-5.

In the tiebreaker Sampras needed three set points to put it away with a service winner.

A service break in the 12th game cost Sampras each of the next two sets, but in the fourth he went up a break in the third game and never gave up the lead.

The fifth set went on serve to the tiebreaker, when the drama reached its peak.

Sampras, failing physically, nevertheless continued to match Corretja point-for-point.



Sweden's Stephan Edberg holds up a trophy that was a gift from the United States Tennis Association after losing his last match in the U.S. Open. Edberg lost to Croatia's Goran Ivanisevic 6-3 6-4 7-6, to end his career in the American Grand Slam tournament (Reuters photo)

At 3-3, he looked barely able to walk to the other end of the court, but still served a 124-mph service winner for 4-3.

Corretja hit a backhand wide to give Sampras his first match point at 6-5, but Sampras netted a forehand.

Then it was Corretja's turn, as he took a 7-6 lead, only to see Sampras hit a forehand volley winner off his cross-court passing attempt.

Sampras took an 8-7 lead with a well-placed ace on a second serve, then Corretja sealed his fate with only his third double fault of the match.

"It was probably the best match of my career, and the worst one," Corretja said. "The last point, I just wanted to put the ball in and it goes out."

He said it was hard to gauge Sampras' disability, even after the American vomited at the back of the court after two points of the fifth-set tiebreaker.

"I saw him also a couple of times like this," Corretja said.

"Davis Cup last year he was really tired and he is

more dangerous then. He starts to play better."

Corretja added: "He was really, really tired, but at seven-all in the tiebreak, second serve, he can play an ace, so it means he has something in there. Maybe this is why he is Number One in the world."

Edberg, who watched the match while waiting to play, said: "It was hard to believe what was going on out there."

Tournament doctor Brian Hainline said Sampras was suffering from an upset stomach apparently brought on by dehydration.

Sampras' coach Paul Annacone said he believed the 25-year-old player, who owns a total of seven grand slam titles, was also feeling the after effects of the death of his old coach, Tim Gullikson.

Gullikson died in May after a 15-month battle with brain cancer.

"It is an emotionally draining match," Annacone said. "Taking into consideration what happened the last 18 months ... I think it has been a pretty tough year."

Spanish inquisition for Indurain

VALENCIA (AFP) — Miguel Indurain, under contract to ride in the Tour of Spain which starts on Saturday, said here Friday he would compete in only one major event if he continues racing next year.

"I will not allow myself to take part in a race against my better judgement and I will only continue if I think I have a chance of winning the Tour de France again," the 32-year-old said.

Indurain, who failed to win a record sixth consecutive tour in July, revealed he only went to Atlanta after a personal request from King Juan Carlos of Spain.

"I didn't really want to go," he said.

International Olympic Committee President Juan Antonio Samaranch asked King Juan Carlos to try to get Spain's greatest cyclist to the Olympics, where he duly won the road time-trial.

"I'm a professional so I'll do my best here but I can't say how things will go. I've never ridden in a major race so late in the season," he said.

The Tour of Spain, or Vuelta, was changed from a spring to an autumn date specifically to lure the top riders. The 3,898km, 22-stage race finishes in Madrid on Sept 29.

Tour de France winner Bjarne Riis of Denmark is missing and Indurain's greatest challenge will come from last year's winner Laurent Jalabert of France and once team-mate Melchor Mauri of Spain, who won in 1991.

Jalabert is especially keen to make up for his crashing failure in the Tour de France in July after he had started as one of Indurain's biggest rivals.

Tony Rominger, who chalked up a hat-trick in the vuelta in 1992-94, made a late entry to get in shape for the world road championship in his native Switzerland in October.

"I'm feeling pretty good," said the 35-year-old, who may lose his hour record to Britain's Chris Boardman later on Friday.

Tough start for Italian newcomers

PARIS (AFP) — Italy's newcomers to the Serie A face a baptism of fire this weekend with Verona opening their campaign away to champions AC Milan while Reggiana face European champions Juventus.

Milan, under new coach Oscar Tabarez, already have injury problems with skipper Franco Baresi out for a month with a twisted ankle and French striker Christophe Dugarry still not fit after knee surgery.

Baresi's absence means the champions may give 37-year-old former Juventus stalwart Pietro Vierchow his debut as a central defender.

Other new arrivals include former Ajax pair Michael Reiziger, who will look after the right flank, and midfielder Edgar Davids, who is most likely to take his place on the bench.

Roberto Baggio will play behind them in a 4-3-1-2 formation that many top clubs will be adopting this season in the search for goals.

Fiery Yugoslav Dejan Savicevic faces a suspension after being sent off in an ill-tempered "friendly" with Juventus, while Juve themselves face starting off their campaign at Reggiana without skipper Antonio Conte, dismissed in the Milan game.

But coach Marcello Lippi can otherwise call on a full-strength side and is set to give debuts up front to Alen Boksic and Christian Vieri. Ex-Bordeaux midfielder Zinedine Zidane is another debutant.

Bologna, the other promoted side, face Lazio, whose formidable strike force comprises Giuseppe Signori (24 goals last season), Pierluigi Casiraghi (14) and Igor Protti (24 for Bari).

Roy Hodgson's Inter Milan, still reeling from the shock that Nigerian striker Nwankwo Kanu has been forced to quit because of a heart condition, travel to Udinese.

Marco Branca, Inter's top scorer last season, will this time partner Chilean Ivan Zamorano in front of France's Youri Djorkaeff, while England's Paul Ince retains his midfield anchor role.

In the German Bundesliga, leaders Bayern Munich take on struggling newcomers Arminia Bielefeld in the Olympic stadium with Jurgen Klinsmann and Ruggiero Rizzitelli looking to strengthen their burgeoning partnership.

Bayern, under veteran Italian coach Giovanni Trapattoni, are desperate to regain supremacy from Dortmund, champions for the past two years, and they should brush aside their visitors who only 18 months ago were a third division outfit.

But Ernst Middendorp's side, although yet to win, have drawn three of their opening four games and can call on the vast experience of former Hamburg and Frankfurt goalkeeper Uli Stein and 36-year-old striker Fritz Walter.

Controversial Stein — exiled from the German squad a decade ago under Franz

Beckenbauer and later sacked by Hamburg following an onfield punchup — will be 42 next month but his reflexes are still good enough to earn him a first team place.

Walter's former side, Stuttgart, lying second a point behind Bayern, have a tough assignment Sunday against fourth-placed Cologne. The Rhinelanders won their opening three games but then slid to a home defeat against Hansa Rostock.

Champions Dortmund, completing the trio of clubs immediately behind Bayern,

European Soccer

must travel to Rostock while Karlsruhe, unbeaten in their three matches so far, travel to Bochum, likewise unbeaten.

Karlsruhe's South African star striker Dean Dundee, who blasted a hat-trick against Sankt Pauli a week ago and hopes to obtain German citizenship soon, signed a new contract Thursday which keeps him at the club until 2003.

In Spain, Saturday sees the first Barcelona derby of the season as Catalan giants Barcelona face Espanyol at the Nou Camp. Bobby Robson's new charges opened the campaign with a 4-2 win at Oviedo aided by a brace from Bulgarian Hristo Stoichkov, back from a spell in Italy.

But Espanyol slid to a 3-2 home defeat against Sporting Gijon and will be determined to jump-start their season at the second attempt before a 110,000 crowd.

Defending champions Atletico Madrid, who downed Celta Vigo 2-0 on the opening day, next face SD Compostela, still reeling from their 6-0 thrashing by Tenerife.

Atletico's City rivals Real Madrid meanwhile take on promoted Hercules Alicante in the Bernabeu stadium on Sunday looking to improve on last week's modest start which saw them draw 1-1 in La Coruna.

French leaders Paris St Germain are set to play Patrice Loko as a lone man up front when they take on Monaco in Friday's top of the table clash with Brazilians Rai and Leonardo playing off him.

PSG's Brazilian coach Ricardo Gomes successfully adopted the system in the mid-week win over Montpellier and has so far managed to combine a safety-first approach at the back — Paris have yet to concede a goal — with no mean amount of flair in attack in the shape of Loko and Brazilian Leonardo.

Monaco will provide a stiffer test in the shape of strike tandem Victor Ikpeba of Nigeria and Brazilian Sonny Anderson.

Ikpeba scored twice in a 5-1 thrashing of previous leaders Lens as Monaco proved they are serious title contenders this time round.

Defending champions Auxerre face Caen in what appears to be a home banker as they attempt to bounce back from their midweek 2-1 reverse in Strasbourg.

Baggio sounds a warning

MILAN (AFP) — World Cup star Roberto Baggio has sounded a warning to AC Milan's rivals in Italy and Europe this season, saying he is back to his dazzling best.

Milan won the championship last season, but Baggio struggled in a striking role chosen by coach Fabio Capello and rarely played a full 90 minutes. With Capello now at real Madrid and new coach Oscar Tabarez at the helm, a weight has been lifted from Baggio's shoulders.

The 29-year-old former star of Juventus and Fiorentina, who has sparked in pre-season friendlies, wants to win the European Cup and get back his place in the national team.

"I had some major problems here at Milan," Baggio admitted. "Capello played me as a striker and I didn't enjoy it. There was no point discussing it with him, I just had to adapt."

Tabarez knows I like to play behind the strikers, it's the role in which I've always given my best. He wants me free to move

around and take advantage of the open spaces behind the front men, and I like that.

"I played that way at Fiorentina and we scored a lot of goals."

Now I want to do the same again."

After a difficult year, Baggio recently got a standing ovation at San Siro for engineering a 2-0 cup replay win over Empoli. His return of form and confidence have also brought out the sunny side of him.

On the touchy subject of missed penalties, Baggio, who kicked his kick in the 1994 World Cup final against Brazil, quipped: "If I ever catch up with the man who lowered that crossbar, I'll have his head for dinner."

Baggio also wants to play his part in Italy's 1998 World Cup campaign, which kicks off with coach Arrigo Sacchi on October 5 against Moldova, and will later include battles with England.

"Losing my place in the team was a real blow, and hard to come to terms with," he admitted. "But I hope to get it back soon. The

qualifiers are just around the corner and time is passing by."

"But I only have one way of convincing him (Sacchi), with Milan and with the way I play."

Baggio tipped rivals Inter Milan as dangerous championship contenders, especially since the arrival of Youri Djorkaeff, and he had a word of sympathy for the Frenchman's Nigerian teammate Nwankwo Kanu, forced to stop playing because of a heart condition.

"After their moves on the transfer market, I think they are ready to win the championship," Baggio said.

"Djorkaeff is a talented player, a man with fantasy and the ability to create chances. I really like him."

As for Kanu, he added: "This is both tragic and frightening. A boy of 20, brimming with talent, forced to give up football — the job he knows best. I can't understand it. All I can say is I support him all the way."

Leeds clash threatens United's European dream

LONDON (AFP) — Champions Manchester United go into Saturday's explosive Premiership encounter with rivals Leeds anxious not to jeopardise their dreams of European glory.

The European Cup has always been a holy grail for United, who won the trophy for the only time in 1968 during the club's golden era when the likes of George Best, Denis Law and Bobby Charlton graced the club.

Many even believe that last season's double winners are now prepared to sacrifice domestic glory for success in the Champions League.

And as Alex Ferguson prepares for next week's vital clash against holders Juventus, he admits he is more than a little nervous that a full-blooded encounter with Leeds might leave him with an extended injury list.

The Manchester United boss is already without Phil Neville and Roy Keane for Wednesday's game and he knows that any more defensive blows could leave him with real problems against Marcello Lippi's side.

"I'm not going to say that we're down to the bare bones, because that would be unfair," said Ferguson, who deployed Norwegian Ronny Johnsen, David May and Gary Pallister in a three man rearguard in Wednesday's 1-1 draw at derby.

"But the fact that we haven't got Phil or Roy does make it a concern that we don't get any more defenders injured at Leeds, that's for sure."

United have not got off to a flying start to the defence of their Premiership crown, with three draws and just one win in their opening matches.

And though there are still eight months and 34 matches to go, Ferguson will be aware that more dropped points might start to erode team morale as well as leave them trailing dangerously in the title race.

David Pleat meanwhile insists that surprise Premiership pacesetters Sheffield Wednesday can sustain their sparkling form as his side aim to make it five wins out of five against Ruud Gullit's stylish Chelsea.

Pleat is convinced Wednesday, three points clear of Aston Villa, are not about to get footballing vertigo in the dizzy heights of the Premiership peak.

"You get hit by injuries and lose key players and unless you're Manchester United and you've got five internationals on the bench it's tough," said Pleat who was awarded the manager of the month for August on Thursday.

"But our success is based on solidness and strong characteristics. These players are a quite resilient bunch," added Pleat.

Kevin Keegan's Newcastle face a tough trip to Tottenham boosted by a much-improved display in Wednesday's 2-1 win at arch rivals Sunderland.

Goals from Les Ferdinand and the recalled Peter Bredasley sealed Newcastle's second win

of the season but Keegan admits he is still looking for the right blend of players from the embarrassment of talent in his squad.

Keegan knows that centre-forwards Alan Shearer and Les Ferdinand, wingers David Ginola and Keith Gillespie, Faustino Asprilla and utility striker Beardsley cannot all play in the same side.

But for the time being he is happy to leave out Asprilla and Gillespie, saying: "I've tried other solutions but I've come back to Peter (Beardsley) and he's performed for me again as he has always done."

They will face a Spurs side with catastrophic injury problems with the Londoners likely to be without Teddy Sheringham, Chris Armstrong, Gary Armstrong and Dean Austin.

There are also doubts over new Danish signing Allan Nielsen and England winger Darren Anderson who both picked up knocks during a bruising 1-0 defeat at Wimbledon on Wednesday.

Second-placed Villa face troubled, managerless Arsenal confident they can sustain a serious title challenge.

Sasa Curcic, a four million pound signing from Bolton, summed up the mood of optimism in the Villa dressing room after three straight wins.

He said: "I was very impressed with the way they played last season and the club will get even better."

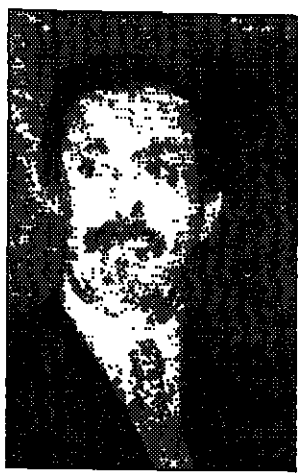
T O D A Y A T	CINEMA TEL: 634144 PHILADELPHIA JADE Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	CINEMA TEL: 699238 PLAZA The Arab Cinema Surprise Ahmad Zaki...in Naser 56 (Arabic) Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:45, 11:00	CINEMA TEL: 677420 CONCORD CONCORD "1" Arnold Schwarzenegger & Vanessa Williams...in ERASER Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 CONCORD "2" MONKEY TROUBLE Shows: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Ammoon Theatre & Cinema TEL: 618274 - 618275 Today presents Zawad Weld Awad theatre group in the play entitled Five-Star Government Starring comedians: Mahmoud Saimah & Hussein Tubeishat play starts 8:30 p.m.	Nabil & Hisham's Theatre TEL: 625155 PRESENTS THE SATIRICAL COMEDY Arab Human Rights At 8:30 p.m. For reservation please call 625155-640155
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Kabariti pledges support for youth, sports

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti Thursday pledged his government's full support of the Kingdom's youth and sports sectors noting that all efforts would be exerted in order to achieve a qualitative leap in the ministry's upcoming programmes.

During his visit to the Ministry of Youth, Mr. Kabariti stressed the need to upgrade the form of the Kingdom's athletes and sports teams by providing them with all the necessary facilities to ensure positive results in the future.

Mr. Kabariti was briefed by Minister of Youth Mohammad Daoudieh and



Abdul Karim Kabariti Secretary-General Isam Aridah on the ministry's latest plans.

The prime minister noted that his government was determined to upgrade the competitive level of national teams and for that purpose was carefully considering the option of withholding participation in regional and international competitions for two to three years while a solid action plan was implemented to ensure future participation on a competitive level.

Mr. Kabariti also discussed Jordan's participation in the Olympic Games and said the below-average results should provide the incentive to plan early and work harder.

Sydney Olympics supremo quits

SYDNEY (AFP) — Businessman John Iliffe announced Friday that he has quit after only six months as Sydney 2000 Olympics supremo in a major new embarrassment to the organising committee.

Iliffe's resignation as president of the Sydney Organising Committee For the Olympic Games (SOCOG) came only weeks after the Atlanta Olympics which he attended, and follows a series of mishaps and disputes in the SOCOG.

He is known to have been concerned about transport and organisational confusion in Atlanta and determined that Sydney would not repeat it.

Iliffe, 59 and chairman of Australian retail giant Woolworths Ltd., replaced former SOCOG president Gary Pemberton on March 5 after Pemberton quit, citing personal reasons.

The new South Wales state government's Olympics minister Michael Knight said he would assume the role vacated by Iliffe, but with the title of chairman.

In a statement Iliffe read to reporters, he described his resignation as "a logical move" which reflected the requirements of the position.

He said that after studying reports of the operations of the Atlanta games and watching the operations at first hand, he felt there had to be "the closest possible relationship between the organising committee, the government of the day and the Olympics movement generally."

His statement hinted at but did not make clear whether he believed such cooperation was missing from the organising committee.

Iliffe said a great number of the services and operations involved in organising the games "necessarily involves government."

The organising committee, he said, must draw heavily on the services of the many government departments and agencies involved.

"Not only does this require the highest degree of cooperation it also requires direct communication," he said.

He said SOCOG also had responsibility for raising the revenue to stage the games and he was confident it would achieve its objective, adding: "nonetheless, the government remains the underwriter of the games."

"For all the foregoing reasons, it is appropriate that the minister representing the underwriter head the overall Olympic team."

Iliffe said the role of SOCOG president was quite demanding, requiring an investment of time and, accordingly, it was best suited to someone overseeing the Olympic effort.

Pemberton, who had been simultaneously SOCOG chief executive and president, took the executive position after at least one high profile candidate pulled out just a day before his appointment was to be announced.

He resigned first from the executive position and later as president following a dispute with Olympic chiefs over European broadcasting rights after personally negotiating a record price of \$715 million for the U.S. rights.



World Boxing Council champion Mike Tyson (left) reaches to shake hands with World Boxing Association champion Bruce Seldon (right) as boxing promoter Don King (centre) looks on at the final press conference promoting their fight at the Hollywood theatre at the MGM Grand Hotel in Las Vegas (Reuters photo)

Tyson fights Seldon tonight

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA (AFP) — Mike Tyson has found a fighter he cannot defeat for all his strength and power.

The legend's name is Muhammad Ali.

"He is the greatest," Tyson said. "Our relationship is good. I consider him a fine man and a great brother. What he went through as a man and how he had to persevere is totally intriguing."

Tyson reflected upon Ali and the former world champion's influence on the reigning World Boxing Council heavyweight champion, who faces World Boxing Association champion Bruce Seldon here Saturday.

Ali's success in the ring and the anti-Vietnam war stance that cost him prime years of his career has made the fighter a hero beyond his sport, so much

so that he was chosen to light a torch at the Atlanta Olympics.

"He was the highlight of the Olympics. It was emotional when he lit the torch," said Tyson, who lamented the games' commercialism and deemphasis of boxing in U.S. television coverage.

"Overall, it was a horrible Olympics," Tyson said. "Everything was advertising and selling. And I couldn't believe they didn't show any fights."

Tyson was 11 years old when he saw Ali during the fighter's 1977 visit to a reform school.

"He was the focal point of the '60s and '70s. I never really saw him in his prime," Tyson said. "(Ali) came in and showed the movie 'the greatest' and I was mad because somebody told me to get me in there. Me and my friend were thinking how we were going to get that guy."

"But we saw Muhammad Ali and it changed my life. I still got in trouble and did things after I left that place. But I always had that thought in mind, that I would like to be like that guy."

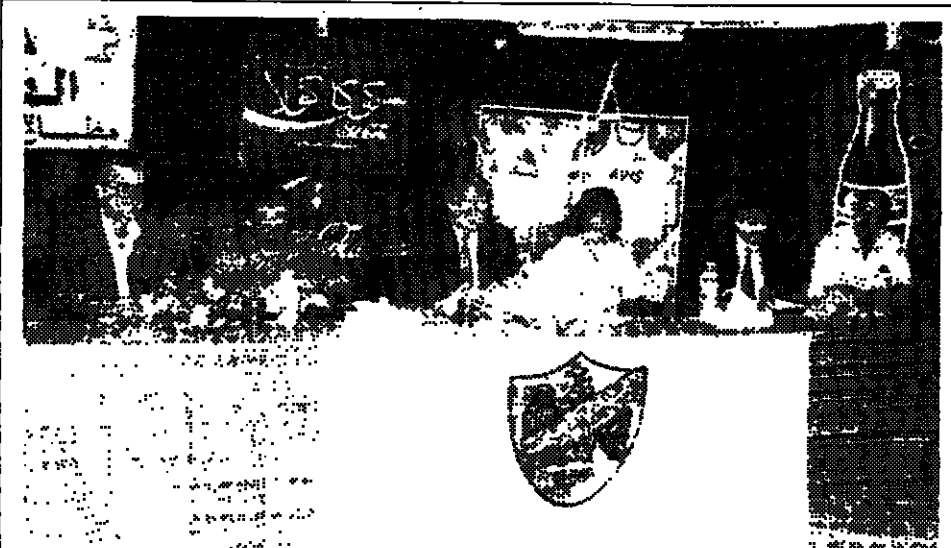
Tyson later did follow Ali into Islamic faith, although he admits he began the studies as a way to pass time during his three-year prison sentence for rape.

Tyson has maintained he was not guilty of the crime and some see him as having been oppressed and lost prime years of his career for being imprisoned unfairly.

While no comparison to the self-sacrificing stance of Ali, Tyson's situation has cast him in a similar defiant role.

"I always admired rebellious people. I always wanted to be like those guys who fought oppression," Tyson said. "I didn't want to be arrogant. But I always wanted to be defiant. I would rather suffer than tolerate being dictated to."

"I'm sure he touched other people's lives too, not just African Americans, with the things he stood for. When we see someone we admire, we are better blind. We all had to admire him for the way he handled adversity. He never cried. He never complained."



Ahli Club officials Thursday hold a press conference in which they announced that the club's athletic teams would have three sponsors in the upcoming season. Ahli spokesman Samir Janakat said that AVIS would sponsor basketball, Al Fanar handball, while Coca Cola will be the official sponsor of the club's general activities. Photo shows Janakat, Ahli chairman Adnan Nagahway and board member Nihad Shafaqouj with representatives of the three companies.

Graf's father says she was unaware of tax schemes

MANNHEIM (R) — The father of tennis star Steffi Graf told a German court on Thursday he had kept his daughter in the dark about her finances but denied tax fraud. The court said Steffi, the world women's number one, had declined to testify at her father's trial because she did not want to incriminate herself. As her father answered tax evasion charges, she was competing in the U.S. Open in New York. Peter Graf, a former used car salesman, blamed poor health, poor guidance and broken promises from local authorities for the tax scandal that brought his arrest 13 months ago. Having spent 13 months in investigative custody, Peter Graf faces a

possible 10-year jail sentence if convicted of evading 19 million marks (\$13 million) in taxes from the late 1980s.

Graf, 58, who accompanied his daughter to tournaments around the world, was arrested last year because prosecutors feared he would flee the country. He and his lawyers again pleaded for his release. Graf said he had always taken responsibility for his daughter's finances. "Our daughter was completely unaware (of her tax situation) until 1995," he said. "In any case, all the back taxes have now been paid."

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The British Council would like to announce that entries for GCE January 1997 and IGCSE November 1996 Examination will be accepted from Sunday 8 September to Thursday 12 September 1996.

Registration time: 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

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Turkey has 'limited goals' in north Iraq

ANKARA (Agencies) — Turkey spelled out limited military goals inside northern Iraq on Friday, saying its troops had yet to cross the border and insisting a planned security zone would be only temporary.

Asked about plans for cross-border operation Ahmet Erturk, deputy governor of the southeastern provinces, told reporters: "There is nothing happening. The journalists have gone there for nothing."

At midnight on Thursday, Iraq summoned a senior Turkish diplomat in Baghdad to complain about Ankara's military build-up at the border with Kurdish-held northern Iraq.

After clashes flared there this week between two Kurdish factions, Ankara said it planned to create a security cordon to repel a third faction, the Kurdistan Labour Party (PKK), fighting for self-rule in southeast Turkey.

But a Turkish foreign ministry official told Reuters on Friday: "A permanent Turkish military existence across the border is out of the question."

The promise of only a temporary security cordon is key to securing the support of Washington, Turkey's closest ally. The United States fired two volleys of cruise missiles at southern Iraqi military targets last week in retaliation for Iraqi intervention in the Kurdish fighting last week.

Foreign ministry officials said "conditions" would determine how long the cordon would be set up and how many troops would patrol the zone, which officials say would extend up to 10 kilometres deep into northern Iraq.

The U.S. State Department said Thursday Turkey assured the United States that its plan for a security zone in northern Iraq would be temporary and involve no Turkish

troops inside Iraq.

U.N. officials in the northern Iraqi border town of Zakho and Kurdish guerrilla forces both said on Friday the border with Turkey was quiet, with no evidence that troops or aircraft had struck.

On Thursday, Turkish troops and equipment were seen moving near the border, apparently part of the preparations to set up a security zone. Turkish warplanes patrolled the sky.

In Baghdad, Iraqi Foreign Minister Saeed Al Sahaf summoned the Turkish acting charge d'affaires to complain the Turkish military measures "constituted a totally unjustified conduct and a violation of Iraq's sovereignty."

Baghdad newspapers said.

Turkish Foreign Minister Tansu Ciller said earlier in the week the rebels of the PKK were massing at the border, prompting Turkey to take "necessary measures."

A senior Turkish military official had raised the possibility of a sudden air-backed assault into northern Iraq.

On Friday Mrs. Ciller hosted consultations with Deputy Chief of Staff General Cevik Bir, the defence and interior ministers, under-secretary of the foreign ministry Onur Oymen and the secretary of the Turkish secret service.

After the meeting she told reporters: "The necessary will be done when necessary."

Defence Secretary William Perry said the United States had no evidence that Turkey had set up the security zone or moved troops into the northern Iraq.

"They have a serious problem with terrorism. And we understand that and sympathise with it. But we do not have evidence at this time that they've actually moved into northern Iraq," Mr. Perry said in an interview with CNN.

Turkish businessmen threaten to violate sanctions on Iraq

ANKARA (Agencies) — Businessmen in Turkey's southern industrial centre of Gaziantep threatened to break a U.N. embargo on Iraq that has ruined the region's economy due to lost trade with the country's southern neighbour.

"The business volume in Gaziantep has halved since the beginning of the embargo on Iraq six years ago and many business places here have had to close due to reduced trade with Iraq," Mehmet Aslan, chairman of the Gaziantep chamber of commerce, said.

"We are urging the United Nations to find a solution to this. Otherwise we will use our own methods to take care of our own business," Mr. Aslan told AFP in a telephone interview.

"We are not in favour of (Iraqi President) Saddam Hussein's policies of violence. However let the United Nations find a way to limit his weapons, but at the same time free trade with Iraq," Mr. Aslan said.

He complained that many of Turkey's Western allies had been continuing trade with Iraq indirectly through companies in

Jordan, the only country that has been allowed to have limited commerce relations with Baghdad.

Mr. Aslan said thousands of people, including businessmen, transporters and traders, who have been adversely affected by the Iraq embargo, would come together at a Gaziantep rally on Sept. 14 to voice their hardships.

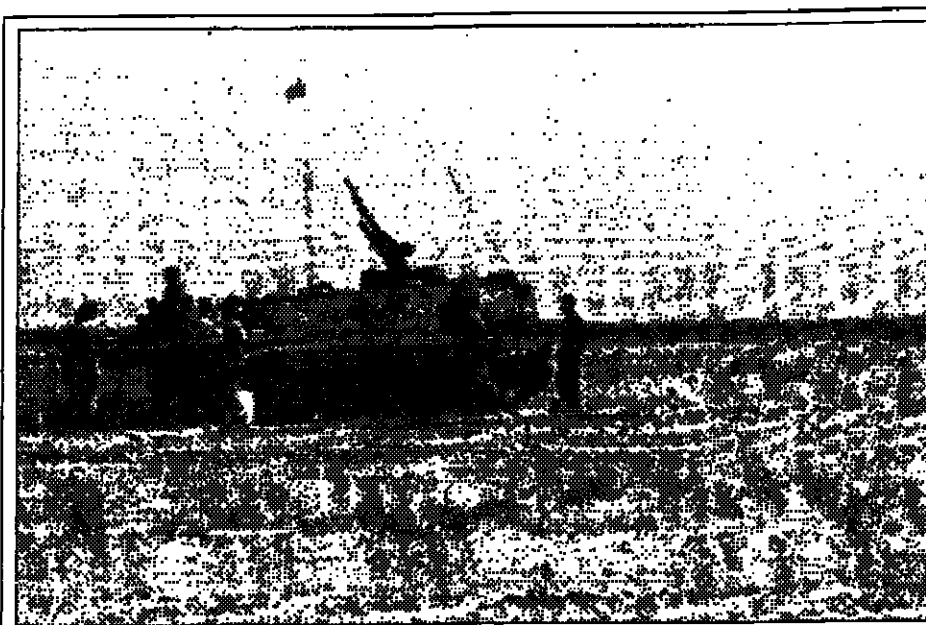
The Turkish Foreign Ministry says Turkey has lost nearly \$27 billion due to reduced economic relations with Baghdad due to the U.N. embargo.

Turkish Foreign Minister Tansu Ciller said on Friday she wanted compensation from the United States for losses incurred by her country's backing for the allied effort against Iraq.

"It's about time the United States proved they also stand by Turkey — these losses have to be compensated," Mrs. Ciller told BBC world television.

"We only want a certain portion of our losses to be compensated economically."

Mrs. Ciller said Turkey was working with U.S. officials on "the economic losses ... and how that can be compensated."



IRAQI TANKS OUTSIDE ERBIL: Iraqi armoured personnel carriers wait in a field 15 kilometres south of Erbil in northern Iraq on Friday. Iraqi troops have pulled back from the northern Iraqi town after the severe clashes between two Iraqi Kurdish factions last weekend. Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) of Masoud Barzani captured the city from the rival Iraqi Kurdish faction of Jalal Talabani's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (see story on page one) (Reuters photo)

Ammarin says King promised to resolve dispute with premier

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Karak Deputy Nazih Ammarin has been quoted as saying that His Majesty King Hussein has pledged to end the dispute that has developed between him and Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti over the Karak riots, which subsequently led the deputy to submit his resignation to the Lower House of Parliament.

In an interview published by the weekly Shihani newspaper over the weekend, Dr. Ammarin said that King Hussein made the pledge during an audience on Sept. 3, when Dr. Ammarin told his side of the story on what had happened between him and Mr. Kabariti on Aug. 16, hours shortly after the riots erupted over the increase in bread prices.

Dr. Ammarin has said that the premier threatened him in a telephone call he made to him on that day. The deputy later denied that the two had reconciled during a meeting at the police headquarters.

The newspaper quoted Dr. Ammarin as saying that the King did ask him to with-

draw his resignation and to reconcile with Mr. Kabariti. While the deputy did not rule out such eventualities, he said he thought the prime minister should first publicly "apologise" for "insulting me, the House and Karak Governorate."

"I am not one of those who would disobey an order by the King, since he is the father (of the nation). But the resignation is now with the House and it is Parliament that will decide on (accepting or rejecting it)," Dr. Ammarin was quoted as saying.

Shihani quoted Dr. Ammarin as saying that the King had asked him to reconcile with Mr. Kabariti, who initially attended the audience but then the deputy requested the King to talk with him privately.

In the one-on-one meeting, Dr. Ammarin said, he explained to the King what happened in the city. Saying that the security reports that were made about the riots were inaccurate, he also told the King that he had expected the riots in Karak to occur due to the difficult living conditions, poverty, unemployment and "favouritism as well as

frustration resulting from the peace treaty because people were expecting much to come of it."

The deputy said he also spoke to the King of "irregularities and violations of the law" by members of the Cabinet, especially ministers who are deputies because "their performance is governed by electoral calculations and interests."

He called for separation between the executive and legislative authorities.

Dr. Ammarin said the King received him with "warmth" and "was understanding of my position."

Dr. Ammarin said he had been looking forward to meeting with the King for six months and the audience "was an honour...and I felt happy to be able to (tell the King) with honesty and objectivity about what has happened in the domestic arena."

The Karak deputy earlier told the Jordan Times that he insisted on his resignation, which the House will either approve or reject when it convenes in its ordinary session in October. The House is currently in its summer recess.

Syrian-brokered Hizbollah-Amal election accord removes rivalry in South Lebanon

TYRE, Lebanon (AFP) — A Syrian-brokered accord to set up a joint Hizbollah-Amal list has taken the sting out of Shiite Muslim rivalry in the South Lebanon elections on Sunday but raised fears of a low turnout.

The Shiite groups, said the accord, was designed to avoid any violence between the Iranian-backed Hizbollah and the Syrian-backed Amal in southern Lebanon, the last active battlefield between Israel and the Arabs.

"But this imposed list is a way of telling us that our votes are worthless," protested Ahmad Hajo, a customer at a coffee shop in the port city of Tyre.

Sheikh Nabil Kawook, a senior Hizbollah official, said President Hafez Al Assad of neighbouring Syria — the main power-broker in Lebanon where it deploys 35,000 troops — intervened

personally to set up the coalition.

"We have given orders to our members to vote for the coalition," he said from the market town of Nabatieh.

Amal spokesman Arafat Hijazi, from the Masyah hill-top villa of Amal leader and parliamentary Speaker Nabih Berri, said the coalition came as a "shock for our members and supporters."

"But we have explained the necessity to them," he said. Hizbollah, which spearheads resistance to Israel's occupation of a border strip in South Lebanon, and Amal waged a media war before the coalition was announced on Wednesday in Damascus.

The formation of a single list for Hizbollah and Amal candidates, however, threatens to produce a low turnout, in comparison to the 40 per cent participation at the last legislative elections in 1992.

"Voting has become useless now," said Abu Omar, a cigarette street vendor in the city of Sidon.

"People are depressed at the idea of having Syria write the scenario for tasteless and undemocratic elections," explained a passer-by who refused to be identified.

"Our government keeps saying that it is able to guarantee security, so why didn't it prove it by allowing several lists to compete democratically?" asked Mikhael Ibrahim, a Christian resident of Sidon.

Under the agreement, Hizbollah will run four Shiite candidates and a Sunni Muslim ally.

Amal, which has the backing of Prime Minister Rafik Hariri's government, named the 18 other candidates, including other pro-Syrian Christian and Muslim figures.

Islamist conference in London cancelled

LONDON (AFP) — An Islamic fundamentalist rally condemned by protesters ranging from the president of Egypt to a London gay rights group was abruptly cancelled by its organisers Friday for "security reasons."

Thousands of Muslims had already been booked into the 12,000-seat London arena for the "Rally for Revival" this Sunday when the Al Muhajiroun Party that organised it announced it was off.

"The party has received bomb threats," said Al Muhajiroun spokesman Anjem Choudary. "There has been an adverse press campaign, and demonstrations were planned outside the arena by the gay rights group, outrage by Hindu groups, by Jewish groups and by the (French) National Front."

"In negotiations with London arena it was felt that the security implications were such that it would be better to cancel the conference," said Choudary. "We could not ensure the safety of the attendees."

Although not held, he said, the conference was "a success" because "we got our message across."

Arena general manager Alex McCrindle said it had become "apparent a week or 10 days ago that the security arrangements that are part of our normal hire charge were going to be inadequate as a result of the publicity surrounding this event."

"The organisers had an obligation to meet any additional costs, but unfortunately due to the amounts involved they decided this morning they would not."

The governments of Egypt, Algeria and other countries facing armed fundamentalist movements at home had reproached Britain for allowing the conference on its territory, saying it amounted to a convention for terrorists.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak said he was "surprised at the holding of such a conference, which will include many of

those elements who encourage terrorism."

Britain's response was that while it may have found the participants objectionable, its hands were tied by freedom of expression guarantees that preclude banning the conference.

That principle had come home to Britain earlier this year when the Home Office tried to accommodate Saudi Arabia by expelling vocal Saudi dissident Mohammed Al Massari to a third country, only to be slapped down by a high court.

Mr. Massari is still attacking Saudi Arabia with impunity from his office-home in London, and was to have been a featured speaker on Sunday.

The Home Office had no comment on the cancellation, saying it was "between the organisers and the venue."

However, only 48 hours earlier, the Home Office had issued a strongly-worded warning to the rally's organisers that police would closely monitor the conference, and that any statements made in support of terrorism or racism would violate British law and would be prosecuted.

The organisers advocate the creation of a worldwide Islamic state and violent overthrow of the governments of Middle East countries.

Greville Janner, Labour deputy and Secretary of the Inter-Parliamentary Council against anti-Semitism, welcomed the cancellation, saying the rally "was likely to have harmed the excellent relations between Muslims and Jews in this country which are so important to us all."

David Hunt, chairman of the council, said: "While we are all relieved that this rally will not take place we must remain vigilant."

"Events that are supported by international terror groups and backers of international terror in Britain must be prevented — whether at large arenas or on our university campuses."

Americans told to be cautious in S. Arabia

DUBAI (Agencies) — The U.S. embassy in Saudi Arabia has advised Americans living in the kingdom to remain alert following what it called new inflammatory statements against the U.S. presence in the Gulf and U.S. missile attacks on Iraq.

"While we have no new specific threat information against official or private Americans in Saudi Arabia, there have recently been inflammatory public statements directed against the American presence in the Arabian peninsula," said the advice, issued on an embassy emergency telephone line on Sept. 4.

"In light of these statements as well as developments in Iraq, we believe it is prudent to remind the American community that all Americans throughout Saudi Arabia should exercise caution, keep a low profile, reduce travel within the country and treat mail received from unfamiliar sources with suspicion."

U.S. forces launched missile attacks on Iraq on Tuesday and Wednesday in retaliation for Baghdad's military operation against separatist Kurds in the north.

U.S. and other Western troops deployed in the Gulf have stepped up security measures after 24 Americans and two Indians were killed in Saudi Arabia in two separate bomb attacks in the past year.

There are about 35,000 Americans living in Saudi Arabia as well as about 5,000 military personnel.

"The embassy and Saudi security continue to work closely to enhance the safety of Americans. You should report any suspicious activities or incidents to the embassy or the nearest U.S. consulate," the embassy added.

It did not specify the new "inflammatory" statements against the U.S. presence, but was apparently referring to a statement published in an Arabic-language newspaper at the end of August from Saudi dissi-

dent Osama Ben Laden who called for a holy war against American troops in the Gulf region.

The London-based Al Quds Al Arabi said Mr. Ben Laden called in a 12-page statement "for a jihad against the Americans who are occupying the land of the two (Muslim holy) shrines."

The U.S. State Department last month named Mr. Ben Laden as "one of the most significant financial sponsors of Islamic extremist activities in the world today."

40 reportedly held

Saudi authorities are holding 40 Shiite Muslims in connection with the June bombing that killed 19 American airmen in Saudi Arabia, security sources said Thursday.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, the security sources in Saudi Arabia said 40 Shiites were in detention, among an unspecified number of people in custody for questioning. They said suspects are routinely questioned and released.

Last month, security sources in Saudi Arabia said investigators had made no arrests following the June 25 bombing of a military housing complex in Al Khobar, near the eastern city of Dhahran.

They denied a claim by an opposition group, the London-based Movement for Islamic Reform in Arabia, that six suspects were under arrest and had confessed to the attack.

However, a previously unknown Saudi Shiite dissident group said Thursday that Saudi authorities have arrested more than 100 Shiites Muslims in a crackdown in which hundreds of people were arrested.

Shiites make up about two million of the 12 million Saudi population but say they face job discrimination, have limited freedom of movement inside the country, and are not allowed to travel outside.

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Hitler 'stashed' Mein Kampf cash in Swiss bank

LONDON (R) — Adolf Hitler stashed the huge earnings from sales of his political tract Mein Kampf into secret Swiss bank accounts, Britain's Jewish Chronicle newspaper reported Thursday. The Chronicle said that recently declassified U.S. intelligence reports show that Hitler held numbered accounts at Union Bank of Switzerland (UBS) in Bern and that they were handled by one of his collaborators, Max Ammann, a German. The authors of the 1944 intelligence report also believe that the foreign exchange income of Hitler's Nazi Party was banked at UBS in neutral Switzerland.

The Chronicle said, a UBS spokesman in London declined to comment on the report, saying Swiss law prohibits bankers from discussing their customers' accounts. The report follows the recent declassification of other U.S. documents that showed several tonnes of gold seized from Holocaust victims by the Nazis was placed in Swiss bank accounts and divided up between the allies after World War II. Hitler wrote Mein Kampf (My Struggle), in which he set out his Nazi political philosophy, while he was in prison for his part in the abortive Munich beer hall putsch of 1923. It was published in 1925 and after Hitler came to power in 1933 it was made a school textbook, selling millions of copies in Germany and abroad.

"The discovery of the 'Hitler accounts' is seen as underlining the importance of Switzerland as a banking haven for the Nazis," said the Jewish Chronicle.

Free plastic surgery for agent selling house

ORLANDO, Florida (R) — A pretty profit awaits the Orlando real estate agent who sells a luxury home owned by a prominent local plastic surgeon. Richard Nazareth agreed to provide the usual commission plus up to \$7,500 in plastic surgery for selling his \$745,000 home in the exclusive Heathrow neighbourhood north of Orlando. "We've already seen a lot of enthusiasm from the brokerage community," Stirling International Realty Inc. partner Roger Soderstrom told the Orlando Sentinel.

"The realtor who sells this home ought to look the best he or she can look." The real estate company came up with the idea for the unusual bonus package to draw attention to the 1.5-acre (0.67 hectare) estate, which features a main house with five bedrooms and a guest house.

Former Beatle says wife beats cancer

LONDON (R) — Former Beatle Paul McCartney was quoted Wednesday as saying his wife Linda had won her battle against breast cancer. "She's doing incredibly well," he told the Daily Mirror newspaper. McCartney spokesman Geoff Baker said the singer-songwriter's American-born 53-year-old wife, who underwent an operation for the disease after a routine examination late last year, was feeling great and horse-riding daily. Linda, a photographer, vegetarian campaigner and mother-of-four, has not been seen in public since the operation, leading to speculation that she was ill. McCartney's mother died of breast cancer when he was 14 years old.

Doubts remain a week ahead of landmark Bosnia polls

SARAJEVO (AFP) — Bosnia Friday entered the last week of campaigning for landmark general elections amid doubts over how voters will get to the polls in safety, and continuing threats of a boycott by major parties.

Some three million Bosnians are due to vote in Bosnia's first general elections since the end of the 1992-1995 war.

Some 200,000 voters are expected to attempt to cross the former frontlines to vote in areas from which they were driven earlier in the war.

U.N. police and the international envoy to Bosnia, Carl Bildt, have so far refused to endorse a North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)-approved security plan for the elections which will offer security to voters crossing into

Serb-run areas.

Leaders of several of the main parties in Bosnia's Muslim-Croat federation meanwhile met in the Bosnian parliament to discuss a joint boycott of the landmark elections, which are supposed to usher in a raft of new political institutions.

Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic, the head of the main Muslim party, attended the three-and-a-half hour meeting along with former Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic and Tuzla Mayor Selim Beslagic, the presidential office said.

A press statement would be released later, officials said.

Mr. Izetbegovic has threatened several times in recent days to order a poll boycott by his Party of Democratic Action

(SDA), in a bid to pressure the international agency running the elections to change a controversial voter registration rule. Mr. Silajdzic and Mr. Beslagic have protested that abuse of the voter registration rules by Bosnian Serb parties is being used to swing the vote in certain key towns in favour of the Serbs.

Complaints have also been raised over voter registration abuses, particularly by the Serbs, who used a loophole in the rules to stack Serb voters in some Serb-held strategic towns that had a pre-war non-Serb majority.

In Sarajevo, a meeting between the head of the U.N. police in Bosnia, Peter Fitzgerald, and the interior ministry officials ended without comment.

The agency running the polls meanwhile said the main Bosnian Serb party of indicted war criminal Radovan Karadzic could face sanctions for displaying his picture at campaign rallies.

"We have reports of a most egregious incident at the SDS rally on Thursday," Agota Kuperman, spokeswoman for the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), said.

Under OSCE rules, indicted war crimes suspects are barred from running for public office. In addition, under an agreement brokered by U.S. envoy Richard Holbrooke on July 19, the use of portraits of the former Bosnian Serb leader was banned from the media.

However, despite this Mr. Karadzic posters are often displayed at SDS rallies in the run-up to the Sept. 14 elections. At one such campaign meeting on Thursday, portraits of Mr. Karadzic were handed out by SDS officials to supporters.

A judgement would be made on the issue next Tuesday, Ms. Kuperman said.

In Brussels, Mr. Bildt said Friday he hoped that the new joint institutions to run the war-ravaged country would be in place as soon as possible after the polls.

Speaking after talks with NATO Secretary General Javier Solana, he said that immediately after the official results are announced, "we will try to bring the three members of the (joint) presidency together for the first meeting."